WITHDRAWN

# Through the Bible Day by Day

A DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARY

F. B. Meyer

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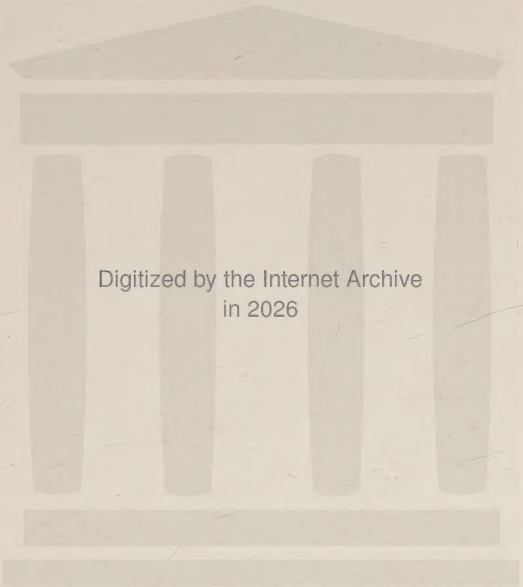

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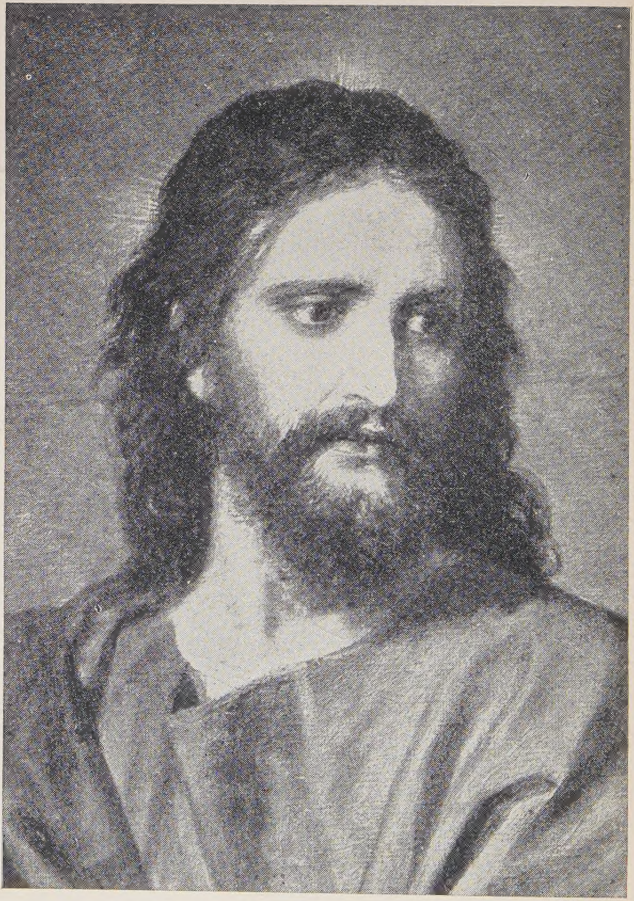

HEAD OF CHRIST. Mark 10:17-22.
(From "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler.")
From Painting by HEINRICH HOFMANN. Modern German Artist.

# Through the Bible Day by Day

A Devotional Commentary

BY

REV. F. B. MEYER

Arranged for Daily Reading, with Book Introductions, Outlines and Review Questions

*Illustrated from Paintings by Modern Artists*

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*VOLUME V*

THE GOSPELS

6344

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# INTRODUCTION

THERE is need everywhere for the cultivation of the habit of reading some portion of God's Word *each day.* Such reading should be *consecutive,* for only thus can continuous interest be maintained. It may also be greatly helped by an *interpreter,* who will explain what is obscure as well as suggest applications of the message to the daily life.

To meet such need this series of seven volumes provides an arrangement of the books of the Bible in daily portions, with concise devotional comments. It includes all portions of the Bible most suitable for daily reading, either individually or in family groups.

As a *commentary on the whole Bible,* these volumes will be found valuable because they omit points of merely scholarly interest and fix attention upon the central message of each passage and its application to daily needs. There are frequent references to other parts of Scripture, especially from Old Testament truths to their New Testament fulfilment and interpretation.

Mr. Meyer's life-long experience in interpreting the Bible to the common people makes him pre-eminently fitted for this service—a crowning one in his world-wide ministry by voice and pen.

Introductions and outlines are provided for each Bible book. Review questions have been added at appropriate points, to enable readers to sum up and better preserve in memory what they have learned. The illustrations, selected from paintings of Bible scenes by modern artists, aid in the interpretation of the passages which they portray.

It is hoped that these volumes will prove of much value to Sunday-school teachers and adult scholars; will promote profitable Bible reading in connection with both family and private devotions; and will everywhere deepen a love for and an intelligent acquaintance with the one Book which can provide a fresh and helpful message for the needs of each new day.

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# DAILY READING OF GOD'S WORD

The Bible is full of God's wisdom. It is the Word of God. We must read it not only with our head, but with our heart. An analysis of its contents is good and desirable; but when all this is done, we need to allow time for the inner wisdom, power and grace which are stored in the Book, to soak into our inner consciousness. Therefore, for some reasons, it is better to have a shorter portion for daily study, to give us time to get all the juice and marrow out of what we read.

This is the method followed in this system. Busy people, students, commercial men, Sunday-school workers and older scholars, soldiers and sailors, people on the hills and on the prairies, living on the edge of the great tides of human activity, will find these passages, selected for daily reading, ample to furnish a daily meal of truth, and yet deep and wide enough for profound inquiry and interest.

It has always seemed to me that the true way to know the Bible is to read it through. It is only so that we can follow the unveiling of the divine purpose, from the Dawn of Genesis to the Perfect Day of the divine writings of John. It is only so that we can obtain a connected view of the wide scope of Revelation. To read in different, unconnected passages, now of Poetry, now of History, now of Doctrine, prevents the mind from getting proper focus. We are apt by that method to concentrate on a few familiar passages, instead of listening to all that God has spoken to men's hearts. There is probably, nothing more vital to an accurate knowledge of the Bible than the good



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old practice of reading it thoughtfully and steadily through with such brief notes as this volume provides.

But let it always be remembered that the profoundest knowledge of the Word comes from the illuminating grace of the Holy Spirit. Ask him to unlock and unfold its sacred mysteries. Ask him to reveal the glories of our Lord in every chapter. Ask him to enable you to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest." Ask him, finally, to enable you to become not a forgetful hearer or reader, but a doer of the Word. See to it that your reading is combined with the faith that claims of God the fulfilment, in your own experience, of all he has promised. No prayer, therefore, is more salutary, as you open your Bible, morning by morning, than the familiar old words of the psalmist: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

F. B. Meyer.

# I

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

# OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

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## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

*There is no reason to doubt that this Gospel was written by Matthew. It presents the narrative of our Lord's life from the standpoint of the pious Jew; and the evident design of the writer is to show how completely and continually our Lord fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures. No other Gospel contains so many quotations from the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. In it the predominant aspect of our Lord's character and work is the Messianic. He was great David's Greater Son. The keyword of the book is "Behold your King." As King, his line is traced through the kingly race. As King, he proclaims the kingdom of heaven. As King, he promulgates the laws, describes the subjects, and announces the rewards of the Kingdom. When describing his own action at the last, when he sits on his throne and all nations are gathered before him, he speaks of himself as King, Matt. 25:40. It was on his avowal of kingship that he was condemned to die. From every viewpoint this Gospel is one of the most precious documents in the world.*

# THROUGH THE BIBLE DAY BY DAY

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

### 1. The Line by Which Messiah Came.

*Matthew 1: 1-17.* The enumeration of our Lord's ancestors, with its threefold division into fourteen generations and evident gaps, was probably so arranged to aid the memory. Notice that, in unison with the general purpose of the writer, the line is traced to Abraham through David the king. Of course we know that Joseph was only the *reputed* father of Jesus, v. 18; but in any case this genealogy conformed to Hebrew usage and explained how the birth took place in David's city.

In this list of names the patriarchs, Gentiles, women of doubtful character, good men and bad men, the wise, the illustrious, the unknown—all supply important links. It is as though to teach us that in the Son of man there is a blending of all classes, that he might be the representative and helper of all. Each of us may find some point of contact in this genealogy. Jesus Christ belongs to our race. He knew what was in man by that subtle and intimate knowledge which comes of kinship. In him, therefore, is neither Jew nor Greek exclusively, but all are one in him.

### 2. The Birth of Jesus Christ.

*Matthew 1: 18-25.* The fear that Joseph, being a just man, might withdraw from their contemplated wedlock, would have filled Mary's heart with untold anguish had she not been upheld by her faith in God. She felt that he was pledged to vindicate her character. Yield yourself to him for his purposes and leave him to deal with any contingent results! He becomes responsible!

That which happened historically must take place experimentally. In each of us Jesus Christ must be



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born through the direct action of the Holy Spirit. See Gal. 4: 1-5. This is what we mean by the new birth; and when he has so entered our hearts, our Lord will become our Saviour, not merely from the penalty but from the love and the power of our sins. Claim that this shall be your experience!

Let us seek after that union with God which is the height of blessedness, both in this life and the next, and in virtue of which God becomes the companion of the soul in its earthly pilgrimage. This is the Name of names—Emmanuel. See Isa. 7: 14; 9: 1-7.

### 3. The Wise-Men Follow the Star.

*Matthew 2: 1-8.* The expectation of the advent of a great king was far-spread at the time of the Nativity. It was probably founded, so far as the East was concerned, on the prophecies of Balaam and Daniel. See Num. 24: 17; Dan. 7: 13, 14. There are evidences of the same expectation in the classic literature of the West. Our Lord was the desire of all nations; and the corruption and anarchy of the Roman Empire made the longing still more intense.

God comes to men in the spheres with which they are most familiar; to Zacharias in the Temple, to the shepherds in the fields, to the Wise-Men by a portent in the heavens. He knows just where to find us. "Lift the stone, and I am there." Be sure to follow your star, whatever it be; only remember that it must ultimately receive the corroboration of Scripture, as in the present case, v. 5. A miracle may be wrought to awaken and start us on our great quest, but the miraculous is withdrawn where the ordinary methods of inquiry will serve. The news of Jesus always disquiets the children of the world; they know that it means division.

### 4. God Rules and Overrules.

*Matthew 2: 9-15.* The suggestion has been hazarded that "the star" was an unusual combination of three

planets; but this would conflict with the disappearance and reappearance of the guiding light. Some experiences during the Welsh Revival seem to point to a connection between high spiritual experiences and a burning glory. Probably only the eyes of the Magi beheld this great light. See Acts 9:3; 26:12-14.

When we follow God's guidance, we may be sure that he will not fail to bring us to our goal. He who brings us out will also bring us in. He will perfect that which concerneth us. These Wise-Men prostrating themselves before the newborn babe were the first of a great procession of the kings of intellect who have followed them to the same spot. After all, does not all true science bend before the mystery of life? We cannot fathom the mystery, but we can adore. We can also present our gifts. "Jesus is worthy to receive *riches*." It was thus that the Father provided beforehand for the expenses attendant on the approaching visit to Egypt. The Herods of this world are always plotting against the Lord's Christ, but it is in vain. See Psalm 2; Acts 4:25.

### 5. "Out of Egypt Did I Call My Son."

*Matthew 2:16-23.* The death of those little children was very pathetic. From the first it seemed as though our Lord's advent would bring not peace, but the sword. Their mothers have long since been comforted, but it was a bitter experience. The little ones were the nucleus of the great attendant crowd "that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," Rev. 14:1-4.

*They are dead that sought the young child's life.* Such is the epitaph that may be written for those who have set themselves to oppose the cause of Christ. Voltaire's house in Geneva is now used as a Bible Society depot. Many of the books that made Christians tremble for the Ark, are to be found on the top shelves of second-hand libraries. There is no permanence in destructive criticism. The young child comes up out of Egypt. There is a sense in which the life of Jesus is the epitome

of the story of Israel and the experience of each Christian. See that you do not linger in Egypt, but come up in the pathway of separation and consecration to his high purposes.

### 6. The Herald Prepares the Way.

*Matthew 3:1-12.* Matthew's Gospel heralds the Kingdom. We are allowed to see and listen to the forerunner, whose voice again awoke the hearts of men with prophetic utterance after a silence of four hundred years. He leaps into the arena with the suddenness of Elijah.

His message was twofold—the need for repentance and the announcement of the nearness of the Kingdom; it thrilled his generation with a strange wonder and interest. All of the southern part of the country seemed to empty itself into the Jordan valley. Yes, if a man is not a reed shaken by the wind, not effeminate in court dress, not a copy but an original, who speaks what he sees and knows of God, men will come to him in every age.

To us also John the Baptist must come, if we shall properly appreciate the Redeemer. We must expose ourselves to the fire, the ax, the winnowing-fan, that we may learn what we really are and come, like Paul, to reckon our own righteousness as loss, if only we may win Christ and be found in him.

### 7. Baptized with the Spirit.

*Matthew 3:13-17.* While John was denouncing the sins of others, he was very conscious of his own. He melted in holy humility before the one nature in which his keen eye detected no trace of impurity, and he strenuously strove to forbid the incongruity of his polluted hands baptizing so pure a being as he felt Christ to be.

Our Lord accepted the disclaimer but overruled it. He alone of all holy men had no consciousness of sin.

"He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," 1 Pet. 2:22. As God's designated Lamb, he was narrowly searched, but those who knew the most about him were compelled to attest his innocence and purity. Yet he was baptized that he might assume the sinner's guilt, standing with him and for him and identifying himself with his lot. Then he was anointed by the Spirit, and attested by the Father's voice. Probably only John and he were aware of these celestial tokens. See John 1:32. But let us stand beneath the same chrism which made him the Christ. See 1 John 2:20, 27.

### 8. Tempted by the Devil.

*Matthew 4:1-11. Then* marks the close connection between the heavenly voice of the baptism and the fiery ordeal of the forty days. Notice that temptation is not in itself sin; only when the evil suggestions of the tempter are harbored do they become sin. Notice also that all around us is a dark region of evil, out of which temptations arise. Whenever you have received a conspicuous revelation, you may expect a time of testing. This is God's way of rooting the trees in the soil, and burning in the fair colors which he paints on the vessels that are being made meet for his use.

The *first* temptation was that our Lord should use for his physical needs the power which had been entrusted to him, as Son of man, for the service of men. The *second* was an effort to incite him to act presumptuously, at the dictate of self-will and apart from the clear guidance of God's Spirit. The *third* was to attain the throne by a wrong method. It was only by the cross that he could win power to rule and save. See Heb. 4:15, 16; 5:8, 9.

### 9. The Light Begins to Shine.

*Matthew 4:12-17.* Our Lord's earliest ministry seems to have been centered in Jerusalem and its contiguous villages. See John 2 and 3. But on the news of the Bap-

tist's imprisonment, he took up his testimony to the hearers of the heavenly kingdom, which is the reign of God over the hearts and lives of men. Someone has said that it is "the universal awareness of God." Yet there was a difference! At the commencement of his work, the Saviour showed a tenderness and a winsomeness which were very inviting to the crowds of harried sheep. See Matt. 9:36. His ministry resembled the gentle, holy dawn that breaks over the mountains and dispels the black shadows of the night. The evangelist quotes the prophet's anticipation of the coming of him who is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God." Oh, do not be afraid when Jesus comes to your heart! You may be as far away from goodness and purity as Naphtali and Zebulun from Jerusalem, but Galilee of the Gentiles is included in John 3:16.

### 10. Opening Works of Mercy and Power.

*Matthew 4:18-25.* We must read the first chapter of John into the opening paragraph. Already the Lord had met with these first disciples in the Jordan valley; but they had returned to their homes and nets. Their prompt surrender was the result of the power over their hearts which the Master had already won. Their old craft was to be theirs still—only in a nobler form. The patience, courage, tact which had been elicited by their calling, were now to be enlisted in the service of souls.

The evangelist then groups together the broad features of the early Galilæan ministry. It was a triumphal progress. Notice the reiteration of *all,* v. 23. The words struggle to convey the wide comprehensiveness of Christ's influence, even across the border. When the love of God came to our world in the person of Jesus, it immediately began to *repair* the havoc and damage which sin had caused. There was no hesitation or questioning where it was God's will to heal. Let us always take that for granted for ourselves and others.

### 11. Opening Words of Grace and Truth.

*Matthew 5: 1-9.* There are many doors into the life of blessedness. It does not depend on outward possessions, such as worldly goods or high birth. There is no soul of man, however illiterate, lonely, or poor, that may not step suddenly into this life of beatitude and begin to drink of the river that makes glad the city of God. Our Lord *lived* this life before he described it. He has opened the doors for us. If you cannot enter by the gate of purity, can you not come in by that which is reserved for those who hunger and thirst?

Note the *passive* side of the blessed life. To be *poor in spirit,* that is, to be lowly in one's self-estimate; to be *meek,* not always interested in one's rights; to *mourn* for the evils of one's own heart and for the sin and sorrow around; to *hunger and thirst* after Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. These dispositions do not purchase blessedness, but to cultivate them is to be blessed. On the *positive* side are mercy, purity, peace and willingness to suffer all things for Christ. Here is 1 Cor. 13 anticipated!

### 12. The New Salt and Light of Human Society.

*Matthew 5: 10-16.* We must expect to be persecuted, if we hold up the pure light of a consistent life amid the evils of the world. Men hate the light which exposes their misdeeds. They will tolerate you only so long as you leave them alone. But the universal testimony of those who have suffered thus is that the Son of man walks through the furnace beside his faithful martyrs.

Our holy lives ought to act as *salt* to arrest the corruption around us. It is said that the presence of a child has arrested many a crime. A sudden silence should fall on certain kinds of conversation when we enter the room. But it is very easy to lose our saltness, as did Lot in Sodom and the seven churches of Asia. See also Ezek. 15: 2-5. Our lives ought to serve also as *light.* The spirit of man is a candle. See Prov. 20: 27. We

need to be kindled by the nature of God. Men *light* candles and God will light you. Let us burn and shine as John did, John 5:35. Beware of the bushel and ask God to choose your stand.

### 13. New Heart Righteousness.

*Matthew 5:17-26.* Our Lord's mission was not to destroy but to construct. As noon fulfils dawn, and summer, spring; as manhood fulfils childhood and the perfect picture, the rude sketch, so does Jesus gather up, realize and make possible the highest ideals ever inspired in human hearts or written by God's Spirit on the page of inspiration.

Under the terms, "the law and the prophets," our Lord includes the entire range of the Old Testament. See Luke 24:44; Acts 13:15. Nothing could exceed our Lord's reverence for the oracles of God. He repeatedly refers to them as of divine authority. His words and teachings are the endorsement of the venerable Scriptures which had nourished his people, preparing them for his further instruction. See Rom. 3:31, 8:4.

The local magistrates' court had the power of life and death, which was inflicted by beheading; the Sanhedrin executed by stoning; the outrageous criminal was cast out to Gehenna, v. 22. In Christ's kingdom unwarranted anger is equivalent to the first, contempt to the second, and vehement passion to the third. To allow hate to smolder is a capital offence.

### 14. Pure Eyes and Clean Speech.

*Matthew 5:27-37.* The legislation of the old time insisted that no member of the commonwealth should commit adultery, and enforced terrible penalties. See Deut. 22:22-24. But the Divine Man, who reads the human heart with perfect accuracy, goes behind the deed to its premonitory stages, legislates about the look that may inflame passion, and condemns the soul that does not instantly turn the eye from that which allures it, to the All-Holy, asking to be cleansed not with tears only but

with blood. The first act in the religious life is to detect right and wrong in the thought or intention. If the tempter is arrested there, he is powerless to hurt. Kill the snake in the egg!

The prohibition against swearing does not deal with taking an oath in the law court. During his trial by the high priest, our Lord did not resent being put on his oath. On rare and solemn occasions we may have to bare our heads before God and ask him to corroborate our word. But how different is this from the frequent and flippant use of expletives and extravagances of speech.

### 15. Brotherly Relationship.

*Matthew 5:38-48.* In mentioning the second mile, our Lord refers to a well-known Eastern custom of forwarding messages by relays of forced labor. We leave our homes on a given morning, anticipating no evil. Suddenly and unexpectedly there are sounds of horses' hoofs and a great demand is thrust upon us. We are sent off in a direction we never contemplated and are *compelled* to go one mile. It is the second that tests character; and your actions with respect to it will determine whether you have entered into the spirit of Christ and are willing to serve others for love's sake and at cost of peril and inconvenience to yourself.

Love to one's neighbor appears in many passages in the Old Testament. See Exod. 23:4, 5. But we have to love *enemies* and resemble God's sun and rain, Matt. 5:45. You say that it is impossible! Remember those sweet old words: "I taught Ephraim to go," Hos. 11:1-4. Ask your Heavenly Father to teach you to love. Remember Gal. 5:22. Dare to believe that he will perfect what concerneth you.

### 16. Secret Giving and Secret Praying.

*Matthew 6:1-8.* First we have the general proposition that righteousness, that is, one's religious duties, should

not be done for the sake of display; and that principle is then applied to alms, prayer, and fasting—the three departments into which the Jews divided personal religion.

The words *take heed* in v. 1 are very searching! We are all likely to put better goods in the window than we have anywhere on our shelves; and to show fairer samples than we can supply in bulk. The Greek word for hypocrite means *stage actor*. We are tempted to assume on Sunday a religious attire which we certainly do not wear in the home or in business.

In her account of the first Burman convert, Mrs. Judson says: "A few days ago, I was reading with him Matt. 6. He was deeply impressed and solemn. 'These words,' said he, 'take hold of my very heart. They make me tremble. When our people visit the pagodas, they make a great noise with trumpets. But this religion makes *the mind* fear God.'"

### 17. How to Pray and How to Fast.

*Matthew 6:9-18.* This might more fitly be termed the "disciples' prayer." As we tread its stately aisles, we cannot but think of the myriads who have stood on the same pavement, and have found, in every age, that these seven brief petitions express sufficiently their deepest and holiest longings. Old men and little children, Roman Catholics and Protestants, the servant and his master, east and west, stand together in this noble temple not made with hands.

Prayer should be direct, simple and earnest. It must be reverent, hallowing the Name; and unselfish, employing, *we, us,* and *our,*—not "I," "me," "mine." It must breathe the filial spirit which cries, "*Abba,* Father." It must be conceived in love and breathe forgiveness and trust for the supply of all the hunger of our nature. When God forgives, he forth-gives; that is, he casts out of his hand and mind and memory every trace of our sin. We may claim that God should repair as well as forgive; but we must be willing to deal with all others as God has dealt with us.

### 18. What to Seek and Whom to Serve.

*Matthew 6: 19-26.* What is in our inner life which answers to the eye of the body? Some have said that it is the intellect; others the heart. But it is truer to say that it is the inner purpose and intention of the soul.

When our physical eye is in an unhealthy condition, the image is doubled and blurred. To use a common expression, it has a squint, such as affected the noble face of Edward Irving, the noted English clergyman. We are told that as a babe he was laid in a wooden cradle, in the side of which was a small hole through which he watched what was going on. This distorted his vision through life. So we may look two ways at once.

The endeavor to serve God and mammon, to stand well with both worlds, to lay up treasures on earth and at the same time be rich toward God, is a spiritual squint. John Bunyan tells of Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, who kept one eye on heaven and the other on earth; who sincerely professed one thing and sincerely did another. He tried to cheat God and Devil, but in the end cheated only himself and his neighbors.

### 19. The Cure for Anxious Care.

*Matthew 6: 27-34.* The Lord's tone is gentle and tender when he turns to address the poor. He says three times over, "Don't be anxious." He never forgot that he sprang, according to his human nature, from the ranks of poverty. His references to patching garments, using old bottle-skins, the price of sparrows, and the scanty pittance of a laborer's hire, indicate that he was habituated to the shifts of the poor.

There is all the difference between foresight and foreboding. It is the latter that Jesus chides. The farmer must sow in the autumn that he may reap in the summer, but there is no need for him to lie sleepless through the nights of winter, worrying about the yet distant harvest. Do not be anxious about the supply of your needs, whether of body, mind, or heart. God knows what you

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need. If he has given life, will he not maintain it? Does he not care for the birds and flowers? Did he not give his Son, and will he withhold any good? Trust him and be at peace.

### 20. Judging Self; Asking God; Serving Others.

*Matthew 7: 1-12.* There is abundant need for a right and sound judgment, illumined by the Spirit of truth; but there is a world of difference between it and the censorious and critical opinions which we are apt to form and utter about others. Human nature is fond of climbing up into the judgment seat and proclaiming its decisions, without hearing both sides or calling witnesses. Beware of basing your judgment on idle stories and gossip. In any case, do not utter it, if it be adverse, unless you have first prayed about it and sought to turn the sinner from the error of his ways. Let God search you, before you search another. See Ps. 139: 23, 24; 1 Cor. 4: 1-5; Heb. 4: 12.

We *ask* for a gift; we *seek* for what we have lost; we *knock* for entrance. Only a door stands between us and Christ! He will not give us stones or serpents, even if we clamor for them; but he will never fail to give good things—and above all his Holy Spirit;—only we must ask for them.

The Roman Emperor Severus was so charmed with the Golden Rule that he had it inscribed on the walls of his palace. Let us inscribe it on our hearts and act on it in the power of the Holy Spirit, who sheds God's love abroad in the hearts of those who believe.

### 21. Seeking Life; Testing Leaders.

*Matthew 7: 13-23.* The world is full of shams. Counterfeit coins circulate; paste jewels are worn. Let us take heed against a counterfeit religion. It betrays itself thus:

(1) *It does not involve the denial of self.* Our Lord compares this to entrance by a strait gate and walking

on a narrow path. It is the way of the Cross. We must say "No" to the "I" life which is seated in our soul and which must be ruthlessly denied. We must say of it as Peter did of Jesus, "I do not know the man." The way of self-indulgence begins on a primrose path and ends in a wilderness. The path of self-denial is steep and difficult at the start, but leads to a paradise of joy.

(2) *It does not produce good fruit.* The worth of the gospel has been attested all down the ages by the characters which it has produced and which have been the world's salt and light. No other teaching has produced such results. Here is the supreme test. There are many new systems of theology, many nostrums are being loudly advertised, but the one test of them all is in the *fruit* they bear.

### 22. Building on Secure Foundations.

*Matthew 7: 24-29.* In the Syrian summer, when the soil is baked hard by the intense heat, any spot will serve equally well as the site of a house. No one can say whether his neighbor has built well or ill;—only the builder knows. But in the winter the rain falls in torrents and the valleys are filled with foaming floods, which sap all foundations that have not gripped the living rock.

To believe *about* Christ is not enough; we must believe *in* him. We must come to him as a Living Stone and become living stones, 1 Pet. 2: 4-8. We must not only listen to him; we must obey him. There must be living, unbroken unity and fellowship between him and us. Then we may proceed to erect the structure of godly and holy living which shall grow into a holy temple in the Lord, 1 Cor. 3: 10-15. May we receive, with meekness, the engrafting of the Word, which is able to save the soul!

### 23. Rewards of Faith.

*Matthew 8: 1-10.* The Lord can touch thy heart, leprous with impurity, and make its stain depart, so that, as

in the case of Naaman, its foulness shall become like "unto the flesh of a little child." See 2 Kings 5: 14. The psalmist cried, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean," alluding to the rite for the cleansing of the leper. Compare Ps. 51: 7; Lev. 14: 4, etc. But one touch of Christ's hand is enough, for he is the great High Priest.

He also can heal the paralysis which has limited thy service and pinned thee down in helplessness. As the centurion recognized, because Christ was obedient to the Father's law he was able to wield the Father's power. He humbled himself and became obedient to the death of the Cross; therefore God hath highly exalted him, that he might send tides of living energy into the paralyzed will. The Apostle Paul testified, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

### 24. The Great Physician.

*Matthew 8: 11-17.* A feast was the Hebrew conception of heaven. The Jews thought they were secure of it, because of their descent from Abraham. Grace is not hereditary; to receive it, every man has to exercise a personal faith in Christ. Let us see to it that our religion is absolutely true, lest it land us in hopeless disappointment.

Notice that faith is the measure of divine performance;—*as . . . so . . .* Our Lord can deliver from the fever-heat of passion and make the soul calm, quiet and pure. It was a wonderful thing that the patient could at once arise and minister in Peter's humble home to their great Guest, but it is even more wonderful when a helpless spirit suddenly emerges from the dominion of passion into strength and beauty.

The key to all true service is furnished in v. 17. We must take to ourselves the infirmities, sorrows and sins of those whom we would really help. This is the law of Christ, Gal. 6: 1-4.

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK. Matthew 8: 16, 17.

From Painting by HEINRICH HOFMANN. Modern German Artist

### 25. Leader of Men and Ruler of Nature.

*Matthew 8: 18-27.* Christ winnows men. Before any enter upon his service, he places before them the inevitable trials which they must meet, among which loneliness and homelessness bulk large. See that in your heart Christ has a home. Where, however, there is lethargy, the Saviour stirs the soul to follow him. Do not mourn about the grave of the past; leave it and enter the life of resurrection and ascension.

Storms must sweep over all our lives. The Master's sleep indicates the peace and security of his nature. What a contrast between our impatience and his infinite serenity! Our Lord was sure that the Father was with him, John 8: 29. Near though the enemy may be, the Father is nearer. The everlasting arms are beneath you. You are beset behind and before, but no boat can sink when Christ is on board.

### 26. An Unwelcome Visitor.

*Matthew 8: 28-34.* The demon spirit seems still to tenant the lives of human beings. To what else can we attribute the paroxysms of passion, the awful cruelties and inhumanities of men? There is only one devil, but many demons; only one prince of the power of darkness, but many emissaries. Take heed, lest you open the door of your nature to the spirit of evil and he possess you. Watch and pray, and trust the keeping of your soul to the hands of Christ. He is stronger than the strong man.

Notice that the demon is set upon destruction. If he may not destroy the souls of men, he will destroy swine. This is the mark of evil. It is always destructive; whereas the Spirit of God is constructive and builds up from the ruins of Satan's work a new heaven and a new earth, both in the soul and in the universe.

All the city besought Jesus to depart, because men count their gains more valuable than his presence. The same spirit rules in the commercial world of today. Let

us beware. What shall it profit to gain the world, if we lose our souls?

### 27. The Forgiver of Sins.

*Matthew 9:1-8.* How inventive and ingenious is human love! Not improbably this was a young man and the others had been his schoolmates and friends for years. They had come to a steadfast faith in Jesus, and it was in response to *their* faith that the miracle was wrought. If only four earnest Christians would take one unbeliever or sinner in hand, we should see new miracles of grace.

Sin lies at the root of all suffering and disease. God's ideal is a fair and healthy body adapted to all the demands we make on it. In this case there was evidently a close connection between the man's paralysis and some former act or acts of sin that lay heavily on conscience and heart. It was as easy for our Lord to utter one sentence as another, and the power which accompanied his utterance in the physical sphere proved that he had equal power in the spirit-world.

His critics were perfectly right. Either he blasphemed or he was the Son of God. Note that title, *Son of man.* Jesus was the last Adam, the second man. See 1 Cor. 15:45.

### 28. The Friend of Sinners.

*Matthew 9:9-17.* The name Levi indicates that Matthew sprang from a priestly line. He had lost all self-respect to become the abhorred instrument of the Roman government, collecting dues on the merchandise that crossed the lake. But our Lord sees veins of gold and precious gems in most unlikely places, and he detected the apostle and evangelist in this despised publican.

Wherever a man is found by Christ, he sets himself to find others, and the Lord is willing to co-operate in any effort to bring others to know him. He will sit with perfect grace among publicans and sinners, lifting them to his own pure and holy level. He is always to be found

where there are sin-sick souls; and where hearts are famished for love and joy, he is with them as their bridegroom.

But the joy of Christ will make for itself its own impression. The ancient forms will not suffice. The old skin-bottle will not contain the ferment of the new wine. How wonderfully Christ could extract lessons from familiar objects!

### 29. Lord of Life and Death.

*Matthew 9:18-26.* No grief appeals to Christ in vain. He always arises to follow. Let us as his disciples ever follow where he leads. We are permitted to be his fellow-workers and to help by our sympathy, prayers, and faith.

This poor woman's faith was very imperfect. She believed that there was virtue in his dress, as the ritualist in the emblems of his death. She cared more for her healing than for the healer. She was full of fear and trembling. But her touch was a magnificent evidence of her faith. It might be as slight as featherdown, but it was enough. Not grasping, but lightly touching!

The incident at first fretted Jairus by its delay; but afterward it helped him. Perhaps it was permitted in order to strengthen his faith and thus prepare him to meet the tidings then upon the way to him. He can awake a girl from death as easily as her mother from sleep at morning prime. Let Jesus take the tiny hands of your children in his. Summon them to life and love!

### 30. The Merciful Deliverer.

*Matthew 9:27-34.* It is thus that the Master speaks to us: *Believe ye* that I am able to make you happy, though you are cut off from the light and gladness of the world? *Believe ye* that I am able to enrich you in poverty, strengthen you in weakness, and raise you even out of death itself, so that the barren rod may bear blossom and fruit? *Believe ye* that I am able to give

a knowledge of God which eye hath not seen nor the heart of man conceived?

It may be with a trembling faith that we answer, *Yea, Lord.* But how blessed is the soul that dares to say *Yea* to the Master's challenge. Understand that there is no limit to what he will do for you, if only you will trust him. The measure of his giving is according to the measure of your faith, and the measure of your faith will be according to the measure of your abandonment to him. Spread abroad his fame. Pharisees hate him, but demons flee.

### 31. Planning the Harvest.

*Matthew 9:35—10:4.* A new chapter in our Lord's ministry opens at this point. As he walked amid the crowded towns and villages of Galilee, his heart was deeply moved. His was the shepherd's nature, which, ever forgetful of self, expends its all for the flock. Jesus loved the poor people tenderly;—those vast multitudes were a scattered, harassed flock. *Fainted* has the meaning of being cast panting on the ground. It was as though they could not move another step. Let us—like our Master—behold, pity, intercede, do our best to send out laborers, and go ourselves, even to a cross, if only we may save.

Pray for laborers, and you will become a laborer. Begin as a disciple, and you will become an apostle. Our Lord is king, and if he sends, he gives his signet ring of authority. See Matt. 28:18. How little did these men dream that their names would be engraved on the foundations of the New Jerusalem, Rev. 21:14.

### 32. Missionaries Sent Out.

*Matthew 10:5-15.* For the present, the Twelve were to confine themselves to Jews, because the Lord's ministry was the climax of the Jewish probation and it was desirable that every opportunity should be given to the lost sheep of the house of Israel to repent. God can

never be unmindful of any covenant into which he has entered with the soul. If we believe not, he remaineth faithful.

May we not say that our Lord was the first medical missionary? He has taught us that the healing of disease is often the best way of approaching the soul. The kingdom of God deals not only with our eternal welfare, but with the conditions of human life. On Christ's head are many crowns; social, family and civic life are departments of his beneficent reign. His servants must be without worldly entanglements and live in absolute dependence upon God to whom they have consecrated their lives. The peace of God goes forth and returns.

### 33. Steadfast under Persecution.

*Matthew 10: 16-23.* The way of the servants and heralds of Christ will never be easy. From the first, it has been lined with jagged flints. On the one hand, they are assailed by the rulers and potentates of this world; and on the other, by the members of their own homes. See Acts 4: 25. But all these experiences are permitted in order to secure an entrance for their message into the most unlikely places, 2 Tim. 4: 17. The fact of the disciples being driven from city to city brought the gospel within the reach of a much wider audience than if they had remained in peace in one center. See Acts 11: 19.

But when we are persecuted for the Lord's sake, the Father bends over us with tender pity and helpfulness, John 12: 26. And we are supplied, from the Eternal Light and Love, with a wisdom of speech and an unfailing patience of love that cannot be gainsaid.

### 34. Fearless Confessors of Christ.

*Matthew 10: 24-33.* The more Christlike we are, the more certainly shall we incur the dislike and hatred of men. Only let us take care that they hate us, not on account of our personal peculiarities and pretensions,

but solely for the truth's sake. See 1 Kings 22: 8; Dan. 6: 5.

Christ is often speaking. In the secret chamber of the heart, in the darkness of the night, in the shadowed room of pain and sorrow, in the room which holds all that is mortal of our beloved, hear his voice. It may be in dark sayings, but they are "the dark sayings on a harp," of which the psalmist sings. There are music, tenderness, love-notes in these dark sayings. And our hearts can receive lasting impressions in the dark.

Remember that in all your anxiety and pain, the Father is near. His presence encloses you in its gentle, holy embrace. You are of *value* to him, of more value than you can count, because you were purchased with the precious blood of Christ.

### 35. Receiving Christ's Representatives.

*Matthew 10: 34-42.* In Jesus Christ we acquire a new affinity, stronger than that of family ties. When we enter into the family of God we belong to all his children. They are our brethren and sisters in the most intimate sense. See Matt. 12: 48-50. The new love that floods our nature does not make us less but more tender and sympathetic toward our own kith and kin; but *if we are compelled to choose,* then we must stand with the children of God, though it should rend us from the old happy family life in which we were nurtured.

As to the closing paragraph, may we not illustrate it thus? When the widow who sustained Elijah at Zarephath entered Paradise, she found herself standing amid the great prophets of Israel. When she asked the attendant angel whether there was not some mistake, he replied, "Certainly not. In treating the prophet as you did, you proved yourself to be of the same spirit and temper as he; and it is but right that you should share in the prophet's reward."

(*The questions on Sections 1-35, to be found on pp. 72, 73, will serve as a review at this point.*)

### 36. How Doubts May Be Solved.

*Matthew 11: 1-10.* The Baptist was languishing in a gloomy dungeon in the castle of Machærus, on the farther shores of the Dead Sea—like a wild creature of the desert, suddenly entrapped. The darkness of his cell depressed his spirit; it seemed strange, too, if Jesus were the Messiah, that he did not overthrow the tyrant rule of Herod and release his captive friend.

When you are in doubt, go straight to Jesus and ask him to deal with it! Our Lord did not argue with the messengers sent by John, but pointed to the beneficent works that the Father had given him to do. See John 5:36; also Isa. 29: 18; 35: 5, 6. The influence of Christ on individuals and the world is the best testimony to the validity of his claims. The demonstration of Christianity is to be found in its acceptance and practice.

The disciples had gone before our Lord uttered this great eulogium on his faithful friend, lest he should be exalted beyond measure, and lest his faith should not have room to grow. Ah, downcast soul, who art writing hard things of thyself, it may be that thy merciful Lord is viewing thy life more accurately and estimating it more lovingly than thou knowest!

### 37. The Last of the Prophets.

*Matthew 11: 11-19.* The least in a higher dispensation has great advantages over the greatest in a lower one. A child on a hill can see farther than a giant in the valley. Many have tried to right the world by violence, by the vehemence of their speech and acts. But it is not so that the Kingdom comes. Its weapon is not the sword, but the cross. Its advent is not as the thunder shower, but as the summer dew or the opening of the dawn.

Our Lord truly estimated the temper of his age. It was fickle, changeable, hard to please; but beneath its evident superficiality there was a substratum of rock. They refused John because of his austerity, and they refused Jesus because of his human kindness and gentle-

ness. Never trim your sails for the world's breath. The breeze springs up and soon dies away. Do God's will!

O sinful brother and sister, can we ever estimate enough the assurance that Jesus is the friend of our souls? He does not disown, withdraw, or reproach. He knows what our temptations are, and makes allowances, and loves us steadfastly forever.

### 38. Woe or Welcome.

*Matthew 11: 20-30. The voice of upbraiding,* vs. 20-24. The Judge weeps as he pronounces the doom of those who reject him. They would have crowned him king, but refused to repent. See John 6: 15. These cities did not crucify him, but they had been deaf to his warnings and indifferent to his mighty works. Even where there is no direct opposition, indifference will be sufficient to seal our doom.

*The voice of thanksgiving,* vs. 25-27. He "answered" the voice of God within his breast. Babes are those who mistrust the reasonings of their intellect, but trust the instincts and intuitions of their hearts. The child-heart looks open-eyed into all the mysteries of God. Learn to say *Yea* to all God's dealings. The Spirit reveals the Son, and the Son the Father. Our Lord must be divine, if only God can know him.

*The voice of pleading mercy,* vs. 28-30. *Labor* is for active manhood; *heavy-laden* for suffering, patient womanhood. The invitation is to commit and submit; to come and to bow under the yoke of the Father's will. Submission and obedience are the secrets of the blessed life.

### 39. The Right Use of the Sabbath.

*Matthew 12: 1-14.* The Pharisees had introduced a large number of minute and absurd restrictions on Sabbath observance; so our Lord set himself to recover the day of rest for the use of the people. He never hesitated, therefore, to work miracles of healing on that day, and

so set at defiance the Pharisees and their evil amendments. He contended also that all ritual observance must take the secondary place, and that the primary concern must always be the deep and pressing claims of humanity. Thus it was perfectly legitimate for David to eat the showbread.

Even if a sheep should fall into a pit on the Sabbath, it would be lifted out by the most punctilious of ritualists. How absurd and illogical it was to prohibit deliverance to this man with his withered hand! Notice that this man's condition is symbolic of many who pose as good Christians, but *do* nothing. They have the power, but do not use it and it becomes atrophied. That power can be given back by Jesus. Dare to act and you will find yourself able to act.

### 40. The Testimony of Deeds of Mercy.

*Matthew 12: 15-23.* A *reed* is not of much account. You may see hundreds of them encircling a stagnant pond and bending before the breeze. A *bruised reed* is still more worthless to the eye of the world. Yet the Master does not despise a bruised or broken reed. No, he bends over it and tries to restore its shape. He makes out of it a reed-organ for music, or the paper manufacturers weave it into paper on which are printed his messages.

*Flax* does not burn readily. It only smolders. The spark runs feebly up the fibers; and anything like a flame is impossible. Such is our poor love. It sometimes seems but a spark. Yet Jesus does not despise it. So far from quenching it, he breathes on it, places it in the oxygen of his love, and screens it from the wind that would extinguish it.

How gentle, quiet and unobtrusive is our Master's behavior! He is so frugal of his resources, so careful that nothing be wasted, so eager to make the most of us. And it is out of such materials that he makes his ever-victorious army.

### 41. Slander from Evil Hearts.

*Matthew 12: 24-37.* Spite and hatred absolutely blind the eyes and distort the judgment. They reached their climax in this effort of the Pharisees to discredit Christ. They could not deny his miracles, so they imputed them to a collusion between him and Satan. On the face of it, this charge was absurd. But our Lord showed clearly that in making the allegation, his enemies were violating their spiritual sense and deliberately blinding their eyes and dulling their ears to God's Spirit. This is the sin that hath never forgiveness, because the soul that acts thus ceases to wish for or seek it.

What a glimpse is given of our Saviour's sore temptations and glorious victory in v. 29! He had already bound the strong man, and for this reason was able to spoil his house and deliver his captives. Let Jesus into your heart, and no foe, though he may batter the door shall break in to destroy!

The one test that Jesus proposes is *fruit*. The nature of a man or doctrine or movement can be rightly estimated only when the results have had time to develop. How splendidly Christianity has stood this test!

### 42. Opposing or Doing God's Will.

*Matthew 12: 38-50.* It was an evil and adulterous age. It had no spiritual appreciation, and was intent on getting an outward and sensible sign. Nineveh itself would have condemned it. The queen of Sheba, without the advantage attaching to the Hebrew race, appreciated Solomon; but the people of this generation had no appreciation of the Christ. They were nearing the last days of corruption and reprobation. They were a deserted palace given over to demons. Seven demons possessed them and urged them, as they did the swine in 8: 31, to destruction.

But amid the general apostasy, there were faithful souls who recognized Jesus as the Son of God and drew near to hear his words. They recognized his kinship

to the Father and revealed their kinship to him. Let us not look back to Nazareth and Bethany with longing eyes. See Solomon's Song 8:1, 2. We are privileged to occupy a closer relationship than that of natural birth. See John 1:12, 13; Gal. 4:1-6; Rom. 8:16. O Brother Christ, make us more like thee!

### 43. Sowing in Different Soils.

*Matthew 13: 1-9.* The varying results of gospel preaching are due, not primarily to the sower or to the seed, but to the ground. Four classes of hearers are described in this parable. (1) The wayside or path, trampled hard as the sower goes to and fro. It was once soft, rich loam like the rest of the field, but in the course of years it has been trodden down by passengers and traffic. The seed falls on the surface, but cannot penetrate. When our heart reaches that condition, we need to ask God to drive through us the ploughshare of conviction or sorrow. (2) There is the superficial soil, very light and thin, beneath which lies the rock. How many are easily moved and touched, but refuse to allow God's truth time to root itself and are as quickly moved by some other appeal. (3) They are the rich with their luxuries, and the poor with their cares, in the thorny ground of whose divided hearts there is no chance for the struggling ears of grace. (4) A fourth part of our hearers will receive the implanted Word into true hearts, and their hundred-fold will amply repay our toils and tears.

### 44. Teaching for the Teachable.

*Matthew 13: 10-23.* Jesus defended his use of parables. He said that he carefully avoided stating the truths of the Kingdom too plainly, so as not to increase the condemnation of those who could not or would not accept them. But where the disciples cared to penetrate below the husk of the story or parable, they would reach the kernel of heavenly significance. It is given to meek and teachable hearts to know the secrets of God. Let us draw

near to the great teacher, the Holy Spirit, asking him to make us know the kernel and heart of the Word of God. See 1 Cor. 2: 6, etc.

Note these points in our Lord's explanation of his parable: (1.) Beware of the evil one, who comes surreptitiously as soon as the sermon is over. (2.) The joy of the young convert must be distinguished from that of the superficial hearer. It is joy in Christ, rather than in the novelty and beauty of the words about Christ. (3.) Expect tribulation where the gospel is faithfully proclaimed. (4.) The cares of poverty hinder as well as the riches of wealth.

### 45. Other Parables of the Kingdom.

*Matthew 13: 24-33.* The tare was a species of rye grass, which in its earlier stages, closely resembled wheat. In this world, and in the Church, professors are closely mingled with possessors. But there come great times of revealing, in the trials and difficulties of life, and in fact Satan and his angels never sleep. Let us beware of them, but be not afraid: Christ is stronger.

The mustard seed and the leaven represent the extensive and intensive, the outward and inward, the objective and subjective, aspects of Christianity. Sometimes when the Church is reaching its branches to the farthest, its heart is being corrupted by the slow spread of evil. See 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8. See what stress our Lord lays on unnoticed beginnings! What seed is smaller than the mustard! Yet it may be the gateway through which Nature may pour her inner energies, forcing the rootlet down and the green shoot up. And it requires but a very small amount of leaven to permeate a large quantity of meal. Bigness is not greatness. Watch the first speck of sin; cherish each grain of holy impulse.

### 46. Genuine and Counterfeit.

*Matthew 13: 34-43.* Throughout the Synoptic Gospels —Matthew, Mark, and Luke—a consistent distinction is

made between the outer ranks of the people, or disciples, and the inner circle of Apostles. May we not emphasize the same distinction still? We have among us many who are clearly *disciples*. They cannot as yet formulate or endorse the full creed of the Church, but if they are true to their convictions and follow the gleam, the Master will bring them to the decision of Peter, Matt. 16:16.

This world is God's field. All the good in it has reached it through Jesus Christ. Fundamentally there are but two classes, for the disciple belongs to Christ, though he has not yet come into the perfect light. Notice that the people who cause stumbling are placed with those who do iniquity, and each class is thrown on the rubbish heap. Ponder the despair with which we shall view wasted opportunities, as we look back on them from eternity;—*weeping* for softer natures, and *wailing* for weaker ones. Let us not trifle away the golden chances of life!

### 47. Securing Treasure; Rejecting the Bad.

*Matthew 13:44-50.* The parables of treasure and pearl are a pair. They describe the various ways we come to know God's truth. Some happen on it suddenly. They are pursuing the ordinary vocations of life when suddenly the ploughshare rings against a box of buried treasure. The husbandman is suddenly rich beyond his dreams.

But in other cases religion is the result of diligent search. Man cannot be happy without God. He goes from philosophy to philosophy, from system to system, turning over the pearls on the dealer's trays; but suddenly his listlessness is transformed to eagerness as he discovers the Christ. Here is the pearl of great price. He has sought and found, and is prepared to renounce all. See Phil. 3:7. Is there not, too, a deep sense in which Jesus has renounced all, that he might purchase for himself the Church, his bride? He is the merchant,

and we the pearl, though only in his eyes—the eyes of love—could we be held worthy of all that he surrendered to win us!

### 48. How Unbelief Hinders.

*Matthew 13: 51-58.* God's truth is always new and always old. It is as fresh as the morning breeze for each coming generation. But however stated, the fundamental facts are invariable. Let us store our minds and hearts with holy and helpful thoughts, so as to deal them out as the occasions serve.

Compare v. 53 with Luke 4: 16-30. The question his townspeople put is stated a little differently in Mark 6: 3. Till he left home, at the age of thirty, for his baptism, our Lord evidently worked with his hands. Perhaps the full wonder of his nature was not realized even by himself. But surely none can despise manual toil when the Son of man wrought at the bench, making, according to the old tradition, implements of husbandry.

Sons and daughters were born to Joseph and Mary, whose names are here given. Alas, that we do not see the glory in common, familiar people and circumstances! Never forget that the absence of expectant faith does more to limit the progress of the gospel than the lack of funds!

### 49. For Righteousness' Sake.

*Matthew 14: 1-12.* In the terror arising from his stricken conscience, Herod made confidants of his slaves, overleaping the barriers of position in his need of some ears into which to pour his fears. He had not finished with John. There is a resurrection of deeds as well as of bodies. The only way to have done with a sinful deed is to confess it and make reparation.

What true nobility John displayed in summoning the king to the bar of eternal justice! He might have said, "It isn't seemly," or, "It isn't politic;" but he puts it on more unassailable ground, which Herod's conscience endorsed: "It is not *lawful.*" Herod was luxurious, sensual,

superstitious and weak. He was easily entrapped by the beautiful fiend. To tamper with conscience is like killing the watch-dog while the burglar is breaking in.

How splendid the action of John's disciples! Reverent love and grief made them brave the king's hatred. In hours of lonely bereavement, the best policy is to go and tell Jesus.

### 50. Abundance for the Hungry.

*Matthew 14: 13-21.* Jesus sighed for a little quiet and sought it amid the lonely hills across the lake. The crowds saw where his boat was making for, and hurried round the shore to greet him. Without a sigh he put away the hope of rest and stillness, and set to work to heal and teach the unshepherded sheep.

This is not only a miracle but a parable. It is thus that the Creator is ever multiplying the slender stores left over from one harvest to produce another. It is thus that he will feed you and yours, if only you will trust him and not run hither and thither in panic. You need not depart from Christ in search of any good thing. All is in him. When he bids us feed the crowds, he makes himself ultimately responsible, but paves the way by forcing home the inadequacy of our resources apart from him. It is as we break and distribute, that the living bread multiplies in our hands. The Church is the intermediary between the living Saviour and the desperate hunger of the world. You may sit at the world's table and remain hungry. But at Christ's table you are filled. There is always more than enough left for the distributor.

### 51. Help in the Hour of Need.

*Matthew 14: 22-36. Jesus always comes in the storm.* It had been a great relief to escape from the pressure of the crowd to his place of prayer, on heights swept by the evening breeze and lighted by the holy stars. But he tore himself away because his friends needed him. He

is watching you also in the storm and will certainly come to your help.

*He uses the element we dread as the path for his approach.* The waves were endangering the boat, but Jesus walked on them. In our lives are people and circumstances we dread, but it is through these that the greatest blessing of our lives will come, if we look through them to Christ.

*His coming is sometimes delayed.* The gray dawn was already beginning to spread over the scene. The disciples' strength was spent. He was not too late to be of service, but just in time to save them from despair. Be of good cheer, and if Jesus bids you come to him on the water, always believe that his commands are enabling. Keep looking to him, not at the storm.

### 52. God's Truth above Men's Teaching.

*Matthew 15: 1-9.* The legal washing of hands before eating was specially sacred in the eyes of the Pharisees. "He who does not wash his hands before eating," says the Talmud, "is as bad as a murderer." Jesus had no sympathy with a system that reduced religion to a slavery to outward forms. His new kingdom was in the heart, in loving sonship to God, and in faith. All outward observances had value only as expressions of the inner spirit. He waived aside their deadly pedantry and told his hearers to care above everything for the cleanliness of the heart.

He did more; he accused the Pharisees of putting their commandments on a level with the divine requirements, and so rendering the whole of Israel's worship vain. The divine authority for what *is* commanded is greatly weakened when it is mixed up with the purely human. A multitude of saints' days weakens the claims of the Lord's day. Remember that no gift to God's service is acceptable if you neglect the claims of those who are related to you by natural ties. Morality in God's eyes stands far above ritual.

### 53. What Really Defiles.

*Matthew 15: 10-20.* It is good to study our Lord's list of the sources of soul-pollution. *Evil thoughts* come first. We cannot prevent an evil suggestion being presented to our minds, but we can refuse to dwell on it. To resist the inclination to dwell on it strengthens us in the opposite direction; to yield to it is to commit the sin in our heart, which, in God's sight, is equivalent to the outward act. Notice that *railing,* that is, unkind and uncharitable speech, is in this black-list.

The *heart,* rather than the body, is the source of sin. *Out of the heart!* The body is the dial-plate on which the soul registers its improvement or deterioration. Do not find fault with your members: look to your heart and keep it beyond keeping, for out of *it* are the issues of life. Ask God to create in you a clean heart. See that you distinguish between the first Adam and the second. *Deny* what you inherit of human weakness and sin, and *affirm* all that is of Christ's imparting. The cross of Calvary and the uprising of the living Christ are facts of perpetual experience.

### 54. The Reward of an Outsider's Faith.

*Matthew 15: 21-28.* A crumb from the table of our Lord can make the heart satisfied and glad. But the suppliant must take the right place and give him his right place. This poor Gentile mother had no claim on Jesus as the son of David;—he was therefore silent. It was impossible for her to come in by the door of the covenant, but his silence led her to knock at another door, and taught her to cry, *Lord, help me.*

There was yet another lesson for her to learn and the Lord knew that she was capable of learning it. She must realize that for the time his ministry was confined to the Chosen People, so that the Gentile claim could be recognized only incidentally. But when she was willing to take the low place under the table and ask for the children's crumbs, he put the key of his unsearchable riches

into her hand, saying, "Woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Those who yield to God most absolutely are able to decree things! See Job 22:28; John 15:7.

### 55. Ministering to the Multitudes.

*Matthew 15:29-39.* Our Lord's mission of grace and truth was at its height. His help was sought with the utmost eagerness. Large numbers of sick were cast at his feet in hot haste. The crumb was given to the woman of Canaan, but whole loaves were distributed to the crowds of Jews, because it was befitting that they should have a full chance to appreciate and accept Christ. For a brief moment they glorified the God of Israel, but the spasm of gratitude was transient. "His own" rejected Jesus. They would have his miracles, but would not own his claims. Take care that you do not become content with getting his help; love him for himself.

Do not suppose that these miracles were confined to his earthly life. He is still the great storehouse of divine and healing energy. He is still moved with compassion, and longs to help each weary and sin-sick soul. His thought still is *lest they faint by the way.* The wilderness can place no bar on "the saving strength of his right hand." Disciples especially are meant to be intermediaries and mediators. They take and give.

### 56. Beware of Evil Influences.

*Matthew 16:1-12.* The signs of the times in our own day are much as they were in that. Still men are lovers of pleasure rather than of God. Still they who will live a godly life must be prepared to suffer persecution. The forms of hatred and dislike of the gospel change, but the hatred of the Cross is as inveterate as ever. The sign of Jonah was his resurrection to take up his cry against Nineveh; the resurrection of Jesus is the Father's seal of endorsement. See to it that he shall rise, not only

in Joseph's garden, but in *thy* heart! That is the best evidence of the truth of our holy faith.

There is abroad today much teaching which may be compared to leaven. The germs of hurtful and false doctrine are as thick as microbes. Propagated by the agencies of the spoken address and the written page, they produce fermentation and unrest in the young and unstable. We must judge these pernicious teachings, not by their pleasant and innocent appearance, but by their effect on heart and character.

### 57. "The Son of the Living God."

*Matthew 16: 13-20.* The shadows of Calvary were beginning to gather and the Lord desired to prepare his friends for all that it stood for. His questions elicited Peter's magnificent confession.

Notice the *date* of the Church. It was still future when he spoke. *I will build.* The materials may have been prepared beforehand, but the actual building began at our Lord's resurrection. He is the *Architect.* Through the centuries he has been building, and if we are in his Church today, we are there because he excavated us out of the first Adam, and placed us in the very position we now occupy. The *foundations* of that Church were not in the Apostle (*Petros*) but in his confession (*petra*) of the divine sonship of Jesus. See John 5: 18. Its *impregnability* is attested, for the Lord himself defends it. See Rev. 2:1. The gates of Hades, that is, the unseen world, include all the principalities and powers that are allied against God's people. They cannot prevail, Eph. 6: 12.

### 58. Bear the Cross for Jesus.

*Matthew 16: 21-28.* The gospel has two parts: Jesus is the Christ; and the Christ must suffer, if he shall enter his glory. Our Lord made sure of the first, before he held to the second. There had been veiled hints of his death before, as in John 2: 19; Matt. 9:15; 12: 40; but

henceforth it was taught without a veil. The Cross had always cast its shadow over our Lord's path. He did not die as the martyr on whom death comes unexpectedly, but he stepped from the throne and became incarnate that he might die. Notice that solemn *must*, v. 21.

How soon Peter fell from his high estate! Beware! The voice that bids us *spare ourselves* is Satan's. Self-pleasing ends in destruction. Self-denial and self-sacrifice are the divine path to life. Let us be more eager to lose ourselves than to find ourselves; more set on the cross than on the glory; more eager to promote the well-being of others than our own. We do not choose or make our cross; Christ gives each a little bit of his true Cross to bear as *he* pleases.

### 59. Jesus Shows Divine Glory.

*Matthew 17: 1-8.* *Moses'* face shone after having absorbed the divine glory, as some diamonds burn with sunlight after being carried into a dark room. *Stephen's* face shone because for a moment he had seen the Son of man. But the face of *our Lord* shone, not from without but from within. The shekinah of his heart was for the most part hidden, but here it burst through the frail veil of flesh, John 1: 14.

The Apostle uses the same word when he says, "Be ye transfigured," Rom. 12: 2. He does not mean that for a brief moment we should see and reflect our Lord's face. He wants us to enshrine him in our hearts, and then to rid ourselves of all hindering veils, so that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God may make even the common garb of daily drudgery beautiful.

This was the great climax of our Lord's earthly life, when he definitely turned away from the glory that was set before him, to endure the Cross for our redemption.

### 60. Lack of Faith Rebuked.

*Matthew 17: 9-21.* As Raphael suggests in his great painting, there is a close connection between the moun-

tain and the valley. The glory of the one did not make our Lord indifferent to the bitter need of the other. It seems as though he desired to impress on us the great truth, that we must have the seclusion and exaltation of communion with God before we can successfully deal with the anguish and terror that devastate human lives. See v. 21.

In v. 17 our Lord grieves over the unbelief of his disciples. Though they had enjoyed his careful teaching, they had failed to grasp his secret, which he here again elaborates. Faith is openness to God. It is the lifting of the curtain, that the healing light may enter. The tiny seed unlocks its little doorway to welcome the entering life of nature; and as this continues to enter, it forces the rootlet downward and the green shoot upward. It is thus also with the life of God in the soul. Let this life of God in and there is no limit to what it will effect.

### 61. Pay Tribute Where It Is Due.

*Matthew 17: 22-27.* All Jews were required to pay the half-shekel for the maintenance of the Temple services. See Exod. 30: 13. As God's own Son, our Lord might surely have claimed exemption from taxation for his Father's house. But he waived his claims, that he might not put a stumbling-block in the way of others. We must often conform to requirements that seem needless, because of the effect of our example on others who have not had the advantages of our illumination.

In the miracle that followed, our Lord sweetly teaches that he is responsible for the expenses of those who have given up other means to livelihood in order to devote themselves to his service. It is as though we are encouraged to go to him to meet the demands made on us for taxes of one kind and another. He will give us what we need, kindly classing himself with us, not in two coins, but in one. Make Christ's interest your aim; he will make your taxes his care. See 1 John 1: 3.

### 62. Removing Stumbling-Blocks.

*Matthew 18: 1-9.* Our Lord's transfiguration suggested that the time to take up his Kingdom was near; and the Apostles began to arrange their plans. The Master therefore used a child for his text and preached a sermon on humility. We must not be childish, but childlike. See 1 Cor. 13: 11. The beauty of a little child is its unconsciousness, humility, simplicity, and faith. Christ's kingdom abounds with the rare blending of the warrior and the child. See 2 Kings 5: 14. God's best gifts are placed, not on a high shelf for us to reach up to, but on a low one to which we must stoop.

An offence is anything that makes the path of a holy and useful life more difficult for others. Be sure, in all your actions, to consider the weaker ones who are watching and following you. "Father," said a boy, "take the safe path; I am coming." A man, whose arm was caught in a machine, saved his boy from being drawn in by severing the arm with a hatchet. All that hurts us or others, however precious, must be severed.

### 63. Saving the Straying.

*Matthew 18: 10-20.* How tenderly the Master speaks of the children! We must turn back to become like them, v. 3. To cause them to stumble is to incur terrible penalties, v. 6. Not one of them is to be despised, v. 10. Each has an angel from the Father's presence chamber—one of the most exalted—to take charge of him, v. 10. To seek and to save one of these, the Good Shepherd is prepared to traverse the mountain paths, v. 12. It is not the Father's will that one should perish.

When *we* have sinned against our brother, we must seek him out and be reconciled. See Matt. 5:23, 24. But when our *brother* has sinned against us, we are to make *three* efforts before we give him up as hopeless. It is the presence of Jesus with his people that brings them into unison with the unseen world, so that their decisions and prayers are simultaneous with the divine mind.

The Advocate-Paraclete in our hearts is at one with the Advocate-Paraclete on the throne, John 14:16.

### 64. Forgiven yet Unforgiving.

*Matthew 18:21-35.* *Seventy times seven* is illimitable forgiveness. These numbers denote the perfection of perfection; and if God asks so much of *us*, what is *he* not prepared to do! Despair of yourself, but never despair of God's forgiving mercy! The cause of soul-ruin is not sin, but the unbelief that thinks sin too great to be forgiven.

The difference between the two amounts of debt named in the parable sets forth the vast difference between our indebtedness to man and to God; and the free pardon of the king teaches us that God desires not only to forgive us, but to wipe out all memory of our sins. We could never pay all, but God will forgive all. Yet, notice that this servant forfeited the king's pardon, so that it ceased to operate. Similarly we may shut ourselves out of the benefits of Christ's death—though it has reconciled the world unto God—by an unforgiving and merciless spirit.

### 65. Jesus' View of Marriage.

*Matthew 19:1-12.* Divorce was common among the Jews of that decadent age, being justified by Deut. 24:1. Concerning this it should be remembered that this legislation, though in advance of the standards of its age, was a distinct concession to the state of morality which had then been reached. You can legislate only slightly ahead of the general maxims and practices of the people, else you discourage them and bring your laws into disuse.

The Lord takes us back to the original constitution of the family, where the *one* man was for the *one* woman. The only act that justifies divorce is the act which violates the marriage vow. Some are debarred from marriage by circumstances, but for such there is provided special grace, if they will seek it. Some refuse marriage

in order to be more free for their life-work. Christ does not set these above others. He does not put special honor on celibacy: but in vs. 13, 14 places special emphasis on the beauty of family life.

### 66. How to Enter the Kingdom.

*Matthew 19: 13-22.* Youth, with all its fervor and impetuosity, is very beautiful in itself and very dear to Christ. Here youth was combined with station, wealth, and noble character. It is not necessary that *all* should sell their goods, and distribute the proceeds. It is a harder task to retain wealth and administer it for God. But it was necessary that the Master should prove to this young man that he was not fulfilling the Commandments quite so perfectly as he had supposed.

How few would wed Poverty today if they had to choose! Yet great riches must lie hidden beneath her rustic dress. Christ chose her as his companion during his human life, and St. Francis of Assisi said that he took her for his bride. In Matthew the beatitude is phrased: "Blessed are the poor in spirit," but in Luke it stands: "Blessed be ye poor." See Jas. 2: 5.

### 67. Riches in the Kingdom.

*Matthew 19: 23-30.* Money is not an unmixed good. It brings in its train many temptations. It is easier to bear poverty than wealth—easier to be a saint when life is hard than when prosperity lavishes her gifts.

When the Pope was showing St. Francis of Assisi the treasures of the Vatican, he remarked: "We can hardly say with the Apostle, 'Silver and gold have we none.'" Francis replied aptly and incisively: "Yes, holy father, and I suppose we can hardly say either, 'Rise up and walk.'" Often it is in the poverty of earthly circumstances that the soul becomes possessed of an authority which wealth cannot buy.

What compensations there will be hereafter in the times of the restitution of all things! See Acts 3: 21.

Then the unsatisfied yearnings for husband, wife, or child; the love which craved for love; the lonely, the homeless, the pilgrim, will neither hunger nor thirst, because the Lamb will lead him to the fountains of waters of life.

### 68. The Bargaining Spirit Rebuked.

*Matthew 20: 1-16.* This parable orginated in Peter's question. He had seen the rich young man go away sorrowful, because he could not meet the test which had been put to him; and he contrasted with that great refusal the swift willingness with which he and his fellow Apostles had left all to follow the Lord Jesus.

"Take care," said Jesus, "or your bargaining for the rewards of the Kingdom will put you down among the lowest; while they who don't bargain will come out at the top." The *last* made no agreement; they came in at the eleventh hour, and were only too glad to take the vineyard path, leaving the vine owner to give what he thought right. The *first* "agreed," taking care to strike a bargain of so much money for so much work. But they would have done better if they had left the payment to the grace of their employer. "For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace, to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed," Rom. 4: 16, R.V.

### 69. Serving Nobler Than Self-Seeking.

*Matthew 20: 17-28.* For the third time our Lord foretells his death. In Matt. 16: 21, he dwelt especially on the shame of his rejection; in 17: 23, he told how the gates of death would open on the Easter joy. Now he declares the *method* of his death, and tells how Gentiles would join with his own people in the tragedy of the Cross. He was no martyr, who went unknowing to his doom. He *set* his face to go to the Cross. Others die because they were born; he was born that he might die.

Many desire the *power* of the throne, without being prepared to pay the price of suffering. Others say glibly

and easily, *We can,* little realizing what their choice involves, and that nothing but the grace of God can make their vow possible of fulfilment. But it is sufficient! Only claim it. God will not fail you! Notice v. 28. The Lord ministers to us all, daily, patiently, lovingly. He took on him the form of a servant and became obedient. Serve all men for his sake! We have to go *down* to reach his side.

### 70. The Great Healer and the Lowly King.

*Matthew 20: 29—21: 7.* The Lord is always saying: *What will ye that I shall do?* Let us not ask small things. We honor him by making great demands. Our greatest requests come far short of his generosity and resources. It seems as though we are always giving him pain by the meagerness of our expectation. Whatever people say, cry out so much the more! But remember it is not the outcry, but your need and your faith which will arrest his steps.

Our Lord entered the city in fulfilment of prophetic vision, but in great lowliness, along the road carpeted by the loving enthusiasm of the crowds. It was largely a Galilæan and popular outburst. The upper classes kept aloof. Remember that ancient prediction quoted here, Isa. 62: 11, and especially Zech. 9: 9. The King comes having salvation. *That* is the divine order! We shall never know the full power of Christ's salvation until we have welcomed him to our hearts as King.

### 71. The Lord of the Temple.

*Matthew 21: 8-17.* It was only a crowd of poor people who escorted Jesus on Palm Sunday to the Holy City; but they sent their hosannas upward to the highest, and their shouts of acclamation and praise are ever ringing down the ages. Let us take them up and pass them on. Hosanna means *Save now,* Psalm 118: 25, which formed part of the *Great Hallel,* or Passover Psalms. Thus, one day, his Church, and probably the

literal Israel of the future, will hail him with transports of joy. See Zech. 2:10. Where Jesus comes, he cleanses. At his word the heart that was filled with the din of worldly care becomes the home of prayer, and children—the emblems of humility, simplicity, and faith—gather. While the needy and the childlike are attracted by our Lord's gentleness, wrongdoers are driven out before the "terror of the Lord."

### 72. Fruitlessness Judged and Faith Rewarded.

*Matthew 21:18-22.* Men have found fault with our Lord for smiting this tree with barrenness. Yet what teacher would not root up a plant, if he desired to teach his pupils some lesson, which could be taught only in that manner! Surely Jesus was perfectly justified in making that fig tree the symbol of the judgment that must overtake all who profess but do not possess. Beware lest he seek fruit of thee in vain!

But how wonderful those words on faith! He could speak thus, because he was the "author and perfecter" of faith. Paul lived by "the faith of the Son of God." See Gal. 2:20. All things are possible to him that believeth. Faith annihilates time and distance. To her the unseen is more real than the seen; and the distant as near as the things which the hand can touch. She is the open hand of the soul, which appropriates and takes from the hand of God. But faith is impossible apart from prayer.

### 73. Authority Which Silenced and Condemned.

*Matthew 21:23-32.* Our Lord always refused to gratify idle curiosity. When an earnest seeker for truth, like Nicodemus, approached him to know the way of life, he was willing to give time and thought without stint. But of what use was it to endeavor to satisfy these men who had refused to acknowledge the divine mission of the Forerunner! They would not speak out their inner convictions, because of the effect it would have on

their worldly prospects. For such as these Christ has nothing. At all costs, we must be true to the inner light, that is, to God's Spirit within us.

The parable of the two sons teaches that hard hearts may lie under fair words, while those of whom we expect least and whose first greeting is abrupt and disappointing, may later prove to be the most devoted and hopeful disciples. If a man repels the gospel with violence, he is more likely ultimately to be won than he who gives a polite and facile assent.

### 74. Rejecters Themselves Rejected.

*Matthew 21: 33-46.* This parable is based on Isaiah 5: 1-7. The husbandmen are the religious leaders of the people. The vineyard is of course the Hebrew nation. The servants sent for the produce refer to the prophets and others raised up from time to time to speak for God and to demand "fruits meet for repentance." Notice that when he speaks of the mission of the Son, our Lord severs himself, by the sharpest possible line, from all merely human messengers and claims sonship in the most intimate and lofty sense of the word.

It is said that in the building of Solomon's Temple, a curiously shaped stone, sent from the quarry, was left to lie for many months in the entangled undergrowth, till suddenly its fitness was discovered for a place in the Temple walls. Then it was put into its right position, which it occupied thenceforward. This incident may be referred to in Ps. 118: 22. How truly it portrays men's treatment of our Lord! Is he *your* corner-stone?

(*The questions on Section 36-74, to be found on pp. 73-75, will serve as a review at this point.*)

### 75. The Penalty of Slighting the Invitation.

*Matthew 22: 1-14.* We have here a continuation of our Lord's teaching on that last great day in the Temple. This day seems to have begun with 21: 23, and it con-

tinued to 25:46. What wonder that his strength was prematurely exhausted, and that he succumbed so soon under the anguish of his cross!

In this parable he describes his union with his people under the symbolism of marriage. This must have suggested the allusions of Eph. 5:23-32, where the Apostle tells us that Christ loved the Church as his bride; and of Rom. 7:1-4, where he encourages us to believe that we may be married to him who was raised from the dead. We can never forget Rev. 21:2, 9. Messenger after messenger was sent to the Hebrew people, but as they would not come, the Church was called from the highways and byways of the world to occupy the vacant space. But let us see to it that we are clothed in the spotless robe of his righteousness, in which alone we can stand in the searching light of eternity.

### 76. Duties to God and Society.

*Matthew 22:15-22.* This reading begins a marvelous cycle of interviews between our Lord and his questioners. First the Herodians, then the Sadducees, and finally the Pharisees were answered and silenced. What inimitable wisdom there was in his replies! How masterfully he turned the battle from the gate and slew them with their own swords!

Theoretically God was King in Israel. Were, then, the Jews justified in paying tribute to Cæsar? If our Lord had said so, his enemies would have accused him of treachery to the theocracy. If he had forbidden it, they would have accused him of treachery to their Roman conquerors. Our Lord answered with marvelous wisdom. He tore aside the veil and revealed their hypocrisy. That coin indicated that the Romans were responsible for maintaining law and order. It was surely right that Cæsar's dues should be paid. But it was equally right to give to God the souls that he had redeemed. Are we as careful in rendering to God our hearts and lives as we are in paying our taxes and serving the state?

### 77. The Scriptures Teach the Resurrection.

*Matthew 22: 23-33.* The Sadducees professed themselves to be bound by the Pentateuch, and to have searched in vain for evidences of a life beyond. They were greatly startled, therefore, when our Lord proved human immortality from the book of Exodus. He had never passed through their schools and sat at the feet of their great teachers, but he showed them that "at the Bush" the voice of God attested eternal life.

The great I AM would never have spoken of himself as the God of the patriarchs, centuries after their earthly career had closed, unless they had been living somewhere still. It was certain that they were all alive; otherwise God would have said, "I *was* their God." Death is not a chamber, but a passage; not an abiding-place, but a crossing over; not a state, but an act, an experience, a crossing of the bar, a going within the veil. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the myriads who have warred and stormed over the earth, are living as intensely as ever.

### 78. The Summary of the Law.

*Matthew 22: 34-46.* Our Lord seemed to say: "Here is all Scripture in a nutshell; the whole range of human duty in a portable pocket form." We are reminded of Eccles. 12: 13. But what a magnificent definition is here given of pure and undefiled religion! The whole Law is gathered up in that one word *love!* See Rom. 13: 8-10.

In Mark 12: 33 the word *strength* is added. There are four channels of love. The *heart* stands for our emotions; the *soul* for our will and general individuality; the *mind* for our intellect; and *strength* for the activities and energies of our service. Often we cannot *feel* love, but we can always use our strength for God and show our love by doing things which we would never do except for his sake.

The question which the Master propounded to the scribes can be solved only by the admission of his two natures—divine and human—as existing in his one per-

son. As David's Lord he is divine; as his son, he was born of the Virgin. See Matt. 1:1.

### 79. Humbling the Self-exalted.

*Matthew 23: 1-12.* These words were addressed to the disciples and the crowds that had gathered around. The Jewish religious leaders divorced morality and religion, and insisted that men should respect their office, whatever might be their personal character. The craving for this has been the temptation and bane of Christ's ministers in every age.

But how evidently our Lord condemns clerical and priestly assumption! With the two-edged sword, which pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, he cuts between the professions and performances of these men. No more awful words were ever spoken! How true is v. 4! The hypocrite always spares himself, but is merciless in his demands on others. The true servant of God never exacts these titles as a rightful homage, or as indicating either superiority or special sanctity. We all have one Master and one Father; and, though our talents greatly differ, we stand on an absolute equality so far as saving grace is concerned.

### 80. Woes for the False-hearted.

*Matthew 23: 13-26.* These repeated woes may be translated, *Alas for you!* Our Lord with unfailing accuracy indicates the inevitable doom which such conduct as that of the Pharisees and scribes must incur. He forewarned them that they could expect nothing in the dread future but the judgment of Gehenna—the metaphor being taken from the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where fires were kept burning to consume rubbish and refuse.

Hypocrisy is hiding under a cloak of religion the sins which the ordinary moralist and worldling would condemn. It is very injurious, because it hinders men from entering the Kingdom, v. 13. It is punctilious in its

exactions, because while it strains out gnats, it swallows camels. vs. 23, 24. It expends itself on outward ritual—the Pharisees would not enter Pilate's hall on the day before the Passover, but they murdered the holy Saviour. Above all things, let us be true, professing to be no more than we are!

### 81. Judgment and Lament.

*Matthew 23: 27-39.* True goodness recognizes and rewards good in the living; while the evil-minded cannot, or will not, believe that the people whom they meet daily are purely and sincerely good. They pride themselves on what they would have done if they had lived in the great days of the past, but they miss the opportunities which are always ready to hand. In this they judge and condemn themselves.

How sad is this lament over Jerusalem! The yearning love which longed to intercept her descending judgment, as the hen the stroke of danger which menaces her brood, was about to be withdrawn. After striving his best to save them, the world's Redeemer was abandoning his people to the results of their sin, until the time spoken of in Zech. 14: 1-4. Oh my soul, see that thou art hidden under those wings, until all calamities are overpast and the day has broken!

### 82. Be Ready to Endure.

*Matthew 24: 1-14.* Successive generations have pored over these words of our Lord with great eagerness, endeavoring to extract from them a clear forecast of the future. In the case of the early Christians, they warned them to flee to Pella, and in doing so, to escape the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. But to all of us they are full of instruction.

It is best to consider these paragraphs as containing a double reference. In the first place, up to v. 28, they evidently deal with the approaching fall of Jerusalem. Our Lord describes the events which were to mark the

consummation of the age, v. 3, R.V., *margin*. Antichrists, disturbances of physical and national conditions, the persecutions which the infant Church must encounter, the progress of the gospel, and finally the swoop of the Roman eagles on their prey—all these were to mark the close of the Hebrew dispensation and the birth of the Christian Church.

### 83. Beware of False Christs.

*Matthew 24: 15-28.* The abomination of desolation is explained in Luke 21: 20, and probably refers to the Roman ensigns as the symbols of pagan and therefore unclean power. So urgent would be their need of flight that the outside steps of the houses must be used. None might try to save his property. Even the winter's cold must be faced, if life were to be saved; and the flight must be farther than could be covered on a Sabbath day, that is, according to Jewish law, less than a mile.

It is a matter of literal fact that there was compressed into the period of the Jewish War an amount of suffering perhaps unparalleled. Josephus' history of the period abounds in references to these false Christs who professed themselves to be the Messiah.

Notice that, though the elect may be powerfully tempted, they will repudiate and resist the attack and still remain loyal to their Lord. What a searching word is this!—"whom he did predestinate . . . them he also glorified," Rom. 8: 30. They may be tempted, tried, almost deceived, but angels will bear them up in their hands and God will keep their feet. See Ps. 91: 12; 1 Sam. 2: 9.

### 84. Words That Must Be Fulfilled.

*Matthew 24: 29-39.* The preceding portion of this prophecy is by all interpreters applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. But on the portion that follows there is a considerable division of opinion.

Perhaps it is wisest, between vs. 28 and 29, to inter-

polate the Christian centuries during which the gospel is being preached to the Gentiles, according to Rom. 11:25, (but that whole chapter should be considered). Just as one who looks across a mountainous country may count the successive ranks of *sierras* or ranges, but does not record the valleys that lie between, so our Lord, who speaks as the last of the Hebrew prophets, does not stop to notice the story of the Church, but confines himself to the events which are specially Hebrew.

Probably the present age will be ushered out by scenes not unlike those of the preceding one; and immediately afterward the Lord will set up his reign, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. The Advent will be sudden, v. 36; and will find men unprepared, v. 38. The Jewish people will exist as a people till then, v. 34.

### 85. Watch and Work.

*Matthew 24:40-51.* There are many comings of the Son of man before the final one to judgment. We may derive the full benefit of our Lord's words, even though we have arrived at no settled opinion as to the precise order of future events. The hour of our death is as uncertain as that of his coming in the clouds. For each, we should be ready!

Watchfulness is keeping awake! We are beset by temptations to sleep. Bunyan said that we are traveling over the Enchanted Ground, the air of which is very heavy and sleep-producing. How dull we are to perceive the unseen, or to meet the great opportunities of life! *Broken up* alludes to the mud or clay house which could not keep off the thief. Death breaks in and carries us away from all of our treasures. See 1 Thess. 5:2, 4.

We had best wait for our Lord while engaged in carefully discharging our appointed tasks. The Church is a big household in which each has his niche. "To labor is to pray"; to serve is to be ready.

### 86. Be Ready for the Bridegroom.

*Matthew 25: 1-13.* Three remarkable parables occupy this chapter and follow a marked sequence of thought. First, we are called upon to look to ourselves, and be sure that we are prepared to enter the wedding feast; that is, to enter into the holiest and closest union with our Lord. Many are called into that union of thought, and prayer and service, but, alas, how few there are who approve themselves as chosen for that inner intimacy! We must see to it that our hearts are pure with virginal purity, and that the light is ever burning in our hearts, through the continual inpouring of the oil of the Holy Spirit.

How marvelous the power which, from the noisy night procession of an oriental wedding, could bring this exquisite parable! The short, warm Eastern night, the ten girls, the cry, the peace of the prepared, the anguish of the unready, the inside and outside of the door! O blessed Comforter, may we not fail thee, as thou wilt not fail those who in their weakness seek thy help!

### 87. By Faithfulness Win Reward.

*Matthew 25: 14-30.* We are not only guests, but servants, who must give an account of their stewardship. Each bond slave has been entrusted with at least one talent. The number of talents varies with our ability to manage them. The Master is not unreasonable, and never overtasks. It is by use that the power to use grows. By carefully employing our opportunities, our sphere of service may be greatly widened, so that, at the end of life, we shall be able to do twice as much as at the outset.

Christ is always coming to reckon. Every communion season, every birthday, is a standing at the judgment seat of Christ, preliminary to the great white throne, 2 Cor. 5:10. Let those who are entrusted with one talent only be specially on the watch, for they are most exposed to the temptation of saying, "We can do so little, we will do

nothing." What you can do best, and which most accords with your circumstances, is probably your talent. If you cannot do much yourself, work with your church and under the direction of your pastor, v. 27.

### 88. Serve Christ by Serving Others.

*Matthew 25: 31-46.* We are called to watch the procedure of God's moral government. This is primarily a forecast of the judgment of *the nations*, v. 32. It would seem as though, in the first instance, their doom will be largely affected by their treatment of the Hebrew people, *the brethren* of Jesus after the flesh, v. 40. Probably this parable is being enacted before our eyes—Spain in the Cuban war and Russia today.

But the parable has a wider range. Our Lord evidently identifies himself, not so much with great causes as with *all* who are weary and heavy laden, who are sorrowful or sinful, who have drifted into the hospitals and prisons of the world. None are too desolate and sorrowful to attract his loving notice, and he hails as "blessed" all who sympathize with and help them. In the closing verse, it should be noticed that in the R.V. the word *eternal* stands in *each* clause; and it should be remembered that it stands for a *quality* of existence which is altogether independent of time.

### 89. Love's Fragrant Ministry.

*Matthew 26: 1-13.* How great the contrast between the plotting in the court of Caiaphas and the love-ministry of Bethany! Yet even there, a strain of needless sorrow was added to the cup of our Lord. While his foes were plotting his destruction, it became necessary for him to speak on behalf of the devoted woman who was suffering criticism for his Name. It is probable that, of all people then living, Mary was the only one who had really entered into the meaning of the Lord's words and had realized the scenes of suffering that lay

before him. Through the succeeding hours the aroma of that ointment, lingering still on his person, must have sweetly reminded Jesus how dearly he was loved.

Mary is not named in this Gospel, perhaps because it was written during her lifetime and such a reference might have exposed her to suffering. But in the fourth Gospel she *is* named, because by that time the whole family had gone into the presence of him whom they so devotedly loved. Do not be deterred by utilitarian calculations from the spontaneous expression of love to Jesus.

### 90. A False Friend Exposed.

*Matthew 26: 14-25.* While Mary sacrificed a large sum of money to show her love to Jesus, Judas sold him for the hire of a slave. See Zech. 11: 12.

The Lord had a great desire to eat this last meal with his own; and it was a proof of his loving anticipation of the strain to which they were to be exposed in soul and body, that he had made arrangements for it with some secret disciple. How glad this loving soul must have been to make the loan of that guest chamber!—but have you placed your heart at his disposal? See 1 Cor. 5: 7.

It was a time of testing as well as of fellowship. None of us should sit at the table of the Lord without careful self-examination and confession. We all need to say, *Lord, is it I?* and to ask that we may be clad in the white robes through his precious blood. Remember, also, that they who in all humility and self-distrust fear lest they should commit the deed of treachery, are always the ones to whom it will be impossible.

### 91. A Self-confident Disciple Warned.

*Matthew 26: 26-35.* The Passover looked back to the dread hour of the Exodus; the Supper links Calvary with the Second Advent. In partaking of it we should not confine ourselves to either retrospect or anticipation,

but should endeavor to feed our souls with the very spirit and heart of our dear Lord, so as to absorb his divine strength, sweetness and love. We need to feed on his flesh and drink of his blood after a mystical fashion, so that he may become the Life of our life. The word *new* is not the same as in Matt. 9:17, but contrasts, with the present order of things, something entirely different. *The former things will have passed away*—such was our Lord's anticipation!

The new covenant is further explained in Heb. 8. It is good to recite its provisions when we sit at the Table. It is as though God and the believer drink of the cup in pledge of that blessed understanding between them. See how our Shepherd eagerly warns one of the sheep that was dear to him and for which he had pleaded often, Luke 22:31.

### 92. The Hour When the Flesh Was Weak.

*Matthew 26:36-46.* In human life there is a close connection between our hymns and our olive-presses. We pass from the supper to the garden, from the emblems to the reality. But not all can enter into the fellowship of our Lord's unknown sufferings. Paul longed to do this that he might realize also the power of His resurrection, Phil. 3:10. Our Lord longs for the sympathy which will keep awake for love of him, though it may not understand all that is in his heart!

Notice that though the cup seemed to be mixed and presented by human hands, our Lord refused to see in it these alone, but went behind them to the permissive will of God the Father. It is this thought that extracts bitterness from the bitterest cup. In the same sentence Jesus bade the disciples sleep on and arise. It was as though he knew and felt that though the past had gone beyond recall, yet further opportunities and testings were awaiting them and him. These they would en-

counter and share in company. He is always saying to us, however unworthy—*Let us be going.*

### 93. Betrayed and Forsaken.

*Matthew 26: 47-56.* We cannot fathom the secret thoughts of the traitor. Did he hope that his act would compel Christ to take the course of self-vindication, which his mighty acts appeared to make possible? It seems unthinkable that there was not some explanation other than mere greed! Yet, when we look into our own hearts, can we be altogether surprised? How often have we betrayed the Lord by our reticence, when we should have spoken; by the kiss of the lip, when we were selfishly exploiting our association with him to our own advantage!

Our Lord did not die a martyr's death. The martyr is led to the scaffold or stake because he is overpowered by superior force. But our Lord knew that the invisible world was full of help if only he had expressed the slightest wish. Others die because they are born; he was born that he might die. "He laid down his life that he might take it again." He would not receive help from the Father, or the angels, or Peter's sword, but poured out his soul unto death, because of a love that was stronger than death. See 1 Pet. 2: 21, etc.

### 94. The True Answer to False Witness.

*Matthew 26: 57-66.* This meeting of the Jewish leaders had been hastily summoned; but their difficulty was to substantiate a charge that would warrant the death sentence. They had to go back to the beginning of Christ's ministry for the one charge that seemed sufficient for their purpose. But see John 2: 19; Mark 14: 58. In the meanwhile our Lord opened not his mouth. He left his reputation in the care of the Father, to whom he also committed his soul. It is a good example to follow. Do what is right and let God vindicate you!

It was only when Jesus was directly challenged as to his unique relationship to God, that he opened his lips. There is an evident reference in his words to Dan. 7:13, 14. The court instantly recognized that in his reply he claimed to be equal with God. To be the Son of God was to be God. See also John 5:18. Note that word *henceforth*, which suggests that though it is hidden from us, the Kingdom is already set up, as was David's even when Saul was still on the throne.

### 95. "Ashamed of Jesus!"

*Matthew 26:67-75.* What a shameful travesty of justice! When men yield themselves to violence like this, their passion condemns them as perpetrating the devil's work. But in the whirlwind of abuse and horror, the one thing that hurt our Lord was the defection of Peter, Luke 22:61.

It was love that led him to dare to follow to the court. John contrived to get him in, John 18:16. But he stood too near the fire amid that motley group, who were discussing their night adventure. He had been too self-confident, John 13:36; he had not watched unto prayer, Matt. 26:40. The more he cursed and swore, the more he betrayed his Galilæan brogue. Ah, the agony that ensued! Did he rush off to Gethsemane, and throw himself on the bent grass, where the form of the Master had so recently lain prostrate? Did his tears mingle with the sweat of blood? But Jesus loved him still, and was preparing a propitiation that would cleanse his sin, as he had already secured that his faith should not fail, Luke 22:32.

### 96. The Betrayer's Remorse and Suicide.

*Matthew 27:1-10.* It was the very early morning when Jesus was led off to Pilate, for he was on the cross by nine. Judas apparently watched the scene from afar. It may be that he was stricken with horror, when our Lord did not exert his mighty power in self-deliverance.

The only expedient that occurred to the traitor as practicable was to attest the Lord's innocence. What a tribute that was to the absolute purity and beauty of the life which he had known for so long in the closest intimacy! If there had been a flaw, he would have caught at it as justifying his deed; but there was none. See Heb. 7:26, 27.

The money burnt his hands and rang on the marble floor. Who can estimate the despair, the horror, the blackness of darkness that drove him to a suicide's fate? See Acts 1:15, etc. Note how punctilious these false priests were, v. 6. It is certain that even after this, if he had repented, he would have been forgiven. But despair had seized him. He went to his own place! Each of us is making a place for himself and is going to it.

### 97. Barabbas or Christ?

*Matthew 27:11-21.* The vacillation of Pilate made him a criminal. Weakness becomes sin. At first he evidently meant to release Jesus, but instead of saying so outright, he strove to bring about his release by indirect means and without committing himself.

First, he sent him to Herod, Luke 23:17, thinking that a Jew would view favorably the position of a fellow-Jew. Then he sought to touch the springs of pity by the anguish of scourging. Finally, he gave the people the choice between Barabbas and Christ, feeling sure that they must choose the liberation of a lover of men rather than that of an outlaw.

None of these expedients succeeded, and he drifted into the very act which his conscience had condemned from the first. He is a specimen of those weak men who want the right thing to be done, but will not adventure their own interests to get it done. There is no chance of such men coming out right. The one hope for us all is to declare ourselves for the right and true, at once and from the start.

### 98. The Stain Water Could Not Wash Away.

*Matthew 27: 22-31.* No judge ought to have asked the crowd what he should do. But every man has to do with Christ. He is ever standing before the bar of conscience, and each of us must accept or condemn, do homage or crucify. If we do not pronounce *for* him, we pronounce *against* him; and there is a moment when our verdict becomes irrevocable. "What I have written, I have written." We are all writing our legend, and affixing it to the Cross for the universe to read, and a day comes when it is irreversible.

We may wash our hands after the deed of treachery is done, but water will not avail for Pilate, for Lady Macbeth, or for us. We need the *blood* of Christ, ere we can be cleansed from all sin, 1 John 5: 6.

The King of men must wear a crown of the thorns with which sin is so closely identified. See Gen. 3: 18. Only thus can the crown of universal empire be won! The robe of mockery must precede his Ascension vesture. The reed is appropriate, for it is through such that he wins and rules. See Isa. 42: 3 and 57: 15.

### 99. "Where They Crucified Him."

*Matthew 27: 32-44.* He will not drink what would dull his keen sense of the momentous issues of the Cross. Those taunts were true. None who save themselves can save others. The cry of forsakenness, the midday midnight, the yielded spirit, the rent veil, the opened tombs, the sympathy of nature—all these proved that this was no common death, and were in keeping with everything that Scripture had foretold, 1 Pet. 1: 11.

Our Lord was wrapped in midnight, that he might be our "bright and morning star." He became obedient to death, that he might give eternal life. His heel was sorely wounded, that he might break the head of him that had the power of death, and might wear forever at his girdle the keys of death and Hades. Make his soul an

offering for thy sin. Hide in the cleft which the soldier's spear opened in his side. He has made peace by the blood of his Cross; we have but to accept and be at rest.

### 100. The Broken Heart and the Rent Veil.

*Matthew 27: 45-56.* With hushed hearts we stand in the presence of "that sight." It is the tragedy of time; the one supreme act of self-surrender; the unique unapproachable sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. It is here that myriads of sin-sick, terror-stricken souls, in every century, have found refuge. It is here that martyrs have been made strong to endure. It is here that Jacob's ladder rested, in the lower places of the earth, for he that ascended is the same also that first "descended into the lower parts of the earth." He became "obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. *Wherefore. . . .*" See Phil. 2: 8.

The centurion had seen other crucified ones die, but never one like this. He recognized the superhuman elements of the scene. But for us, the emotions of this hour are not those of wonder, but of loving gratitude and faith. He "loved *me*," he "gave himself up for me," Gal. 2: 20.

### 101. The Closed and Guarded Tomb.

*Matthew 27: 57-66.* Fear not to entrust yourself to God in death. If you yield up your spirit and commend it to the Father's hands, he will provide for it and for your body also. He has his Josephs everywhere. He will provide loving hands for the body, which was the shrine and casket of the precious jewel that he bought at so great a cost. Precious in his sight is the death of his saints, Ps. 116: 15.

The kings and princes of this world set themselves to guard the sepulcher of the Son of God by sealing-wax and sentries. They might as well have endeavored to restrain the bursting life of spring. Said the King of

Terrors to Captain Corruption, "Take care to keep this Man's body fast." But what did this avail, when it had been ordained that he should not stay in Hades, nor even see corruption? Whatever your foes may do against you will not avail, if only you wait patiently for God. See Ps. 40.

### 102. The Open and Empty Tomb.

*Matthew 28: 1-10.* Ere the sun had risen and while the glory of the dawn was faint in the Eastern sky, the women were well on their way. But he whom they sought had gone. How often we look down into the grave of the dead past, and into the vault where we have buried twin-souls; or we peer for help into the diaries, prayers and rites of departed saints or a moribund church—but we do not find the Lord. The divine Leader of souls is not behind us, but before; not in the grave of the dead past, but in the van of the world's march. Lo, he beckons us on to follow the Ascension mountain and the opened heaven!

The Lord engaged women as messengers of his resurrection. See Ps. 68:11. How eagerly they caught his idea, and with what alacrity they endeavored to fulfil it. And as they went he, for whom they went, met them! It is ever thus. We go on his errands, but we do not leave him as we go. On the contrary, *he* meets us. See Isa. 64: 5.

### 103. The Great Commission of the Risen Lord.

*Matthew 28: 11-20.* What absurdity in this mendacious explanation! How could the soldiers know who stole the body, if they were *asleep?* Sceptics have to believe greater marvels than believers. Was it likely that Christ's friends would have wished to unwind the clothes that covered that sacred body? Would his enemies have taken the time, or forfeited the rich shroud

"He Is Risen; He Is Not Here." Mark 16:1-6.

From Painting by Karl G. Pfannschmidt, Modern German Artist

that Joseph's love provided? Men will believe any lie rather than God's truth, because their hearts are evil.

This mountain at the conclusion of our Lord's life corresponds to the mountain of temptation at the beginning. There he was offered the empire of the world, if only he would take the easy lower path; here he is acknowledged King of the world, because he took the harder one of obedience unto death. This glorious charge to his Church has the ring of universality. It combines the herald and the shepherd, and assures each humble disciple that the day will never dawn, however stormy, on which his Lord will not be near.

(*The questions on Sections 75-103, to be found on pp. 75, 76, will serve as a review at this point.*)

# REVIEW QUESTIONS ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

## OUTLINE.

(*a*) What are the main divisions of this Gospel?
(*b*) In which divisions are the discourses and parables of Jesus recorded?

## INTRODUCTION.

(*c*) From what standpoint is this Gospel written?
(*d*) What is the purpose of the writer?
(*e*) How does it differ from the other Gospels?
(*f*) What is its keyword?

## SECTIONS 1–35. CHAPTERS 1–10.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

1. Why does this Gospel open with the genealogy of Jesus?
2. What message did the angel bring to Joseph?
3. How did the chief priests and scribes know where Christ should be born? Why did the Wise-Men disregard Herod's command?
4. How does the coming and return of the Wise-Men illustrate divine providence?
5. On the death of Herod, where did Joseph and Mary make their home?
6. What work was John the Baptist sent to perform?
7. Why was Jesus baptized?
8. What was the meaning of each of the three temptations of Jesus?
9. What is meant by "the kingdom of heaven"?
10. Who were the first disciples?
11. How may the Beatitudes be classified?
12. What did Jesus declare his disciples to be?
13. What was Jesus' relation to the Law and the Prophets?
14. How did Jesus enlarge the application of the Law?
15. What is the true motive for right living?

16. What is Jesus' teaching regarding alms? regarding prayer?
17. What is the condition of divine forgiveness?
18. How can we lay up treasures in heaven?
19. Why is anxiety about food and raiment wrong?
20. What cautions does Jesus give about judging others? What are the resources of a Christian?
21. How is our character revealed?
22. What was the effect of Jesus' teaching upon the multitude?
23. What spiritual truths do Jesus' miracles of cleansing and healing illustrate?
24. What did Jesus say of the centurion's faith? How did Peter's wife's mother show gratitude to Jesus for her healing? What prophet foretold Christ's healing ministry?
25. What did Jesus require of those who would be his disciples?
26. What miracle did Jesus perform in the country of the Gergesenes?
27. How did Jesus show his authority to forgive sins?
28. Whom did Jesus call to discipleship from the receipt of custom? With what question did some of the disciples of John the Baptist come to Jesus?
29. How did Jesus show his power over death in the home of Jairus?
30. To what agency did the Pharisees attribute Jesus' power to work miracles? Why?
31. For what did Jesus tell his disciples to pray?
32. What instructions did they receive as they started out on their first missionary tour?
33. What warnings were given them?
34. What encouragement did Jesus afford them in the midst of persecution?
35. What supreme claim did Jesus make upon his disciples?

SECTIONS 36–74. CHAPTERS 11–21.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

36. On what errand did John the Baptist send some of the disciples to Jesus?
37. What did Jesus say of his forerunner?

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38. Why did Jesus pronounce judgment upon Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum? What wonderful promises follow these declarations of judgment?
39. How did Jesus defend his disciples when the Pharisees accused them of breaking the Sabbath?
40. Of what are the "bruised reed" and "smoking flax" types?
41. What did Jesus declare to be the unpardonable sin? What did he say about idle words?
42. What was Jesus' reply to the sign-seeking Pharisees? What constitutes kinship to Jesus?
43. What are the leading facts in the parable of the sower?
44. What explanation did Jesus give of this parable?
45. What other parable about a grain field did Jesus tell? What was the parable about a mustard seed? leaven? In what respect are these parables alike?
46. How did Jesus explain the parable of the tares?
47. What other parables of the Kingdom did Jesus relate? What additional teaching do they contain?
48. Why were the townspeople of Jesus offended at him?
49. What events led to the execution of John the Baptist?
50. What was Jesus' purpose in miraculously feeding the multitude?
51. What impression did Jesus' walking on the sea make upon the disciples?
52. How did the scribes and Pharisees make the command of God of none effect by their traditions?
53. What did Jesus teach about defilement?
54. What miracle of healing did Jesus perform in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon?
55. What differences are to be noted between the feeding of the four thousand, and the feeding of the five thousand?
56. How did Jesus answer those who sought a sign? What did he mean by the *leaven* of the Pharisees and the Sadducees?
57. What is the rock on which Christ builds his Church?
58. What did Jesus lay down as the terms of discipleship?
59. Who appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration? What proposal did Peter make?
60. What miracle followed immediately after the Transfiguration?

61. How did Jesus respond to the demand for the Temple tax?
62. Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? What sacrifices may well be made in seeking eternal life?
63. Whom did Jesus come to save? To whom is Jesus' presence promised?
64. What does the parable of the debtors teach about forgiveness?
65. What did Christ teach about marriage, divorce and family life?
66. What did the rich young ruler lack?
67. What did Jesus teach about riches?
68. What is the teaching of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard?
69. What teaching was occasioned by the ambition of James and John?
70. What miracle did Christ perform when visiting Jericho? What prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem?
71. Why did Jesus cast the traffickers out of the Temple?
72. Why did Jesus sentence the fig-tree to barrenness?
73. What was Jesus' purpose in telling the parable of the two sons?
74. How did Jesus apply the Scripture about the stone rejected by the builders?

## SECTIONS 75–103. CHAPTERS 22–28.

*(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)*

75. What is the present-day application of the parable of the wedding feast?
76. How did the Pharisees attempt to make difficulty for Jesus with the question about tribute? How did he discomfit them?
77. How did Jesus show the Sadducees that the Pentateuch contains evidence of a future life?
78. How did Jesus answer the question of the Pharisees with regard to the great commandment of the Law? What question did he put to them in turn?
79. What did Jesus teach the disciples about greatness?
80. What indictments did Jesus bring against the Pharisees?

81. How did Jesus show his compassion for the city that rejected him?
82. What signs did Jesus announce to his disciples as foreshadowing the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world?
83. What special warning did he give them?
84. What did he teach with reference to his second coming?
85. Why did he urge watchfulness?
86. By what parable did he emphasize this duty?
87. What is the teaching of the parable of the talents?
88. What account did Christ give of the judgment of "the nations"?
89. What was Jesus' promise regarding the woman who anointed him in Bethany?
90. What agreement did Judas make with the chief priests? How was the purpose of Judas disclosed at the Passover?
91. What ordinance did Jesus institute on this Passover night? How did he rebuke the self-confidence of Peter?
92. What prayer did Jesus offer in the garden of Gethsemane?
93. How did Judas betray Jesus?
94. On what ground did the high priest declare Jesus worthy of death?
95. What led Peter to deny Jesus?
96. What did the chief priests do with the money that Judas gave back to them?
97. What effort did Pilate make to release Jesus?
98. What pretence of innocence did Pilate publicly make? How was Jesus treated by the soldiers to whom he was delivered?
99. How were the following concerned in the Crucifixion: Simon of Cyrene? the soldiers? the Jewish leaders? the thieves who were also crucified?
100. What notable miraculous events attended the crucifixion of Jesus?
101. By whom was the body of Jesus laid in the tomb?
102. Who were the first to learn of the Resurrection?
103. What dealings did the chief priests have with the soldiers who had guarded the tomb? What was the last commission which Jesus gave to his disciples?

# II

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

# OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

## "DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER."

I. The Beginning of the Gospel.....1: 1–13.

1. *John the Baptist Proclaims the Coming of One Mightier Than Himself* .....1: 1–8.
2. *The Voice from Heaven Bears Witness to Jesus*.....1: 9–11.
3. *Jesus Vanquishes the Tempter*...1: 12, 13.

II. Growing Authority and Growing Opposition .....1: 14—3: 6.

1. *The Calling of the First Disciples*.1: 14–20.
2. *Miracles of Healing, and the Forgiveness of Sins*.....1: 21—2: 12
3. *Opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees* .....2: 13—3: 6.

III. The Abounding Ministry.....3: 7—8: 26.

("I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day.")

*Teaching, healing, calling of the Twelve, parables, preaching, stilling the storm, raising the dead, feeding the multitudes, silencing the scribes and Pharisees.*

IV. The Last Journey to Jerusalem....8: 27—10: 52.

1. *The Preparation of the Disciples*.8: 27—9: 50.
   *Peter's confession, the Transfiguration, healing of demoniac boy, who should be greatest?*
2. *Incidents by the Way*.....10: 1–52.
   *Questions of Pharisees about divorce, blessing the children, rich young ruler, ambition of James and John.*

V. In the City of the Great King.....11: 1—13: 37.

*Triumphal entry, cleansing of the Temple, questions, parables, warnings, prophecies.*

VI. The Triumph of Submission.....14: 1—15: 47.
1. *The Culmination of Enmity and of Friendship* .....14: 1–11.
2. *The Last Supper and the Agony in the Garden* .....14: 12–42.
3. *The Betrayal* .....14: 43–52.
4. *The Jewish and Roman Trials*...14: 53—15: 15.
5. *The Crucifixion and Burial*.....15: 16–47.

VII. Captivity Led Captive.....16: 1–20.
1. *The Visit of the Women to the Empty Tomb* .....16: 1–11.
2. *The Walk to Emmaus*.....16: 12, 13.
3. *The Great Commission*.....16: 14–20.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

*That this Gospel is the briefest and earliest of the four needs no proof. It was written between A.D. 63 and 70, and was primarily intended for the Romans. It has always been ascribed to Peter as author, with Mark as acting amanuensis. This accounts for the graphic nature of the narrative and for the many touches which are especially characteristic of Peter. Papias tells us that Mark was "the interpreter of Peter." It is usually believed that this Gospel was written in Rome, and we know that Mark is frequently referred to in the Epistles as associated with the Apostle's life and work there, 2 Tim. 4:11; Philemon v. 24; 1 Pet. 5:13.*

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

## 1. The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry.

*Mark 1:1-20. The ministry of John the Baptist,* vs. 1-8. Always the message of John precedes that of Jesus Christ; first the changed attitude of the will, then faith. The greatness of the Baptist revealed itself in his humility. He saw what we must see, that a negative religion, symbolized by water, is not enough: we need to be set on fire.

*The opening pages of Christ's public life,* vs. 9-20. Jesus was recognized by the Baptist, who beheld the opened heavens and the descending Spirit. If the Lord was thus anointed ere he commenced his life-work, how much more must we be! Hast thou become united with him in his death, made one with him in his resurrection, and anointed by that same Spirit? Then be sure that thou, too, must be tempted. Sons of men must go the way of the Son of man, now under the opened heavens, then tempted of the devil; on one side the wild beasts, on the other the angels; now driven to loneliness, and then to the crowded street of the cities, there to gather disciples by the energy and beauty of a victorious life.

## 2. The Helper of the Needy.

*Mark 1:21-39.* The word *straightway* is typical of our Lord's life. It occurs at least eleven times in this chapter (R.V.), and is the keynote of Mark's Gospel, which is pre-eminently the gospel of service. The ancient symbol for this Gospel was the ox. There is comparatively little said in it, as in Matthew, about the King; or, as in Luke, about the details of Jesus' humanity; or, as in John, about his divine sonship. There are suggestions of all these, but emphasis is laid on the unresting labors of Jesus, who went about doing

good. In illustration of this trait in the Master's life, the evangelist narrates the proceedings of two typical days, the one at the beginning, the other at the close of his ministry. The first typical day is recorded in this chapter, vs. 21-38. The morning was spent in the synagogue, where at the close of the service the demon was cast out; the afternoon witnessed the healing of Peter's wife's mother; the evening beheld the throng at the door, whom he healed. Early next day he had gone forth for prayer, and forthwith started on a mission throughout all Galilee. The second typical day is recorded in 11:20 to 13:37.

### 3. The Friend of Sinners.

*Mark 1:40—2:22. The leper,* 1:40-45. The news of Christ spread fast and far until it reached the outcasts from Jewish society, the very dregs of humanity. As the story of the wonderful miracles wrought by our Lord was pondered deeply by this man, he concluded that the only question which remained was that of Christ's willingness to hear. As to his power there could be no doubt. But no one of all the religious world of that time had ever thought of extending a helping hand to such as he. Note the instantaneousness of our Lord's response to this appeal. His love and power are commensurate; when you gauge the one, you have measured the other.

*The paralytic,* 2:1-12. The disease had resulted from sin. It was necessary to deal with the soul before the body could be emancipated. As soon as we sin, God's pardon awaits our asking for it, and of this fact our Lord gave the paralytic man definite assurance. Jesus' right to speak was evidenced by his power to heal. If the latter was effectual, so was the former. *The sinner's friend,* vs. 13-22. They thought to coin a term of reproach, but they added a crown of glory. In eternity the Friend of sinners will surround *his* table with saved sinners who have become his guests.

CHRIST AND THE FISHERMEN. Matthew 4:18-22.
From Painting by ERNST H. H. ZIMMERMANN. Modern German Artist.

### 4. The Lord of the Sabbath.

*Mark 2:23—3:19.* The ritualist demands the outward, the conventional, the ancient usage of the past. Christ says, "Be natural." The needs of man, whether of body or of soul, are greater than ceremonial restriction. Ceremonies are only expressions of life, and where life is wanting, they are meaningless and void. *The withered hand,* 3:1-6. Through long disuse of powers which God has given, but which we have refrained from exercising, degeneration may have set in; Christ, however, bids us exert them again. In so far as we dare to obey, we shall find ourselves able. Dare to speak, or pray, or work, not at the impulse of your nature, but at *his* bidding, and you will suddenly find yourself given power. *The Apostolate,* vs. 7-19. On three occasions Christ used the boat as his pulpit, Mark 4:1; Luke 5:3. We must be disciples (learners), before we can be apostles (those sent). As the Father sent the Master, so the Master sends us. Our mission is threefold—to bear him company, to perform his errands, and to cast out devils. What infinite variety in the apostolic band! The Boanergic group of four; the group of questioners who were sometimes doubters; and the group of practical men, whose business capacity was a snare at least to one. If there was a traitor even amid the Twelve, who can expect to find his fields free from tares?

### 5. Brother to All Who Will.

*Mark 3:20—4:9.* The Pharisees circulated this infamous charge—not because they believed it, but to satisfy the questions that were being asked on all sides. What they affirmed they knew to be untrue; but for selfish reasons they would not confess what they really thought. Such denial of truth is a deadly and unpardonable sin, because it injures the sensitiveness of conscience and produces moral death. *Family ties,* 3:31-35. The family of Jesus needed to be taught, though with the ut-

most delicacy, that they must not attempt to control his public ministry. All who love God and do his will are welcomed into the divine family circle and become blood relations of the Son of God. *The sower,* 4: 1-9. Note the perils of the hearer, that you may guard against the waste of precious seed. There is a grave peril in the effect of light, fanciful, wandering thoughts. There is great peril also in a mere emotional response—the "*straightway* springing up" which has no root, because the heart is hard. There is danger lest the cares of the poor, the riches of the wealthy, and the too eager pursuit of things by other classes may drain away the strength of the soul, so that the Word of God shall be a slender stalk, without an ear or fruit. It is not enough to hear the Word, we must accept it and bear fruit; otherwise the ploughing, sowing, and all the operations of nature are in vain. Live up to what you know. Obedience is the key to understanding.

### 6. Growth in God's Kingdom.

*Mark 4: 10-41.* How quick the Master was to observe the meaning of natural symbols! To him all things were unfoldings of eternal mystery, and the ways of men unconsciously mirrored the unseen. Are there *bushels* in your life? Use them as lamp stands, not as coverings. All secrets come out; beware of what you say. All measures come back to us; take care how you mete. The mysterious co-operation of God in nature, and the gradual process of growth, are analogous to the co-working of the Holy Spirit with all faithful sowers of the Word, and the imperceptible stages through which the soul reaches maturity. *The stilling of the storm,* vs. 35-41. They that bear Christ's company must prepare for squalls. Yet, why should we fear, when the Master is on board, who can impress his commands on wind and sea—to the wind, *Peace;* to the sea, *Be still!* "The Lord on high is mightier than the waves of the sea." A

moment ago he was so weary as to sleep amid the storm, but at a word of appeal from those he loves, he shows himself able to save to the uttermost.

### 7. Power over Unclean Spirits.

*Mark 5:1-20.* This poor victim of a dark tyrant power was endowed with superhuman strength, and scorned restraint. Terrible to others, he endured untold misery himself, and sought relief in tears and self-inflicted torture. The evil spirit who inflicted torment was also in dread of torment from the gentle Saviour, as one whose eyes are inflamed dreads the light. What an admixture of man and demons—he answered, *We are many!* And how malignant! The demons dread disembodiment and prefer a swine's body to none. Many in our midst are held by a similar diabolic power, against which, because they yielded at first by imperceptible degrees, they now struggle in vain. Yet for such there is absolute deliverance in Christ. The emblem of a sinner, a very Samson in evil-doing, this man gives encouragement to all those who are driven to evil by demon power.

Distinguish between the sinner and the evil spirits that have control of him, and do their will. The demon that torments a man loves mischief, and would rather destroy swine than be idle. It was not Christ who destroyed these animals, but the spirit of evil. Hast thou been redeemed? Go forth and win others for thy Lord. Tell them what he has done for thee!

### 8. Hope for the Hopeless.

*Mark 5:21-43.* We turn from the demon-driven man to this woman, weakened by long disease. For the one there was the outward manifestation of evil, but for the other inward wasting and decay. Let those who are conscious of the ravages of evil in their hearts, destroying their strength, establish connection with Christ as slight as the finger's touch of the garment hem, and forth-

with his virtue will enter and stay their inward malady. His power is ever going forth, and faith receives as much as it desires. The reservoir of power is always full, but how few, how very few, have learned the secret of tapping it!

Crowds throng him, but only one touches. *Proximity* to Christ does not necessarily imply the *appropriation* of Christ. But where there is the faintest touch of faith, there is an instantaneous, may we not say, automatic, response. There may be great weakness, the fingers may be too nerveless to grasp, they can only touch; but the slightest degree of faith saves, because it is the channel by which Christ enters, v. 34. Even children are liable to the havoc caused by sin, vs. 35-43. Death has passed on all, and from the universal blight even the little ones cannot find immunity. But again we turn to the Master of life, whose touch is as gentle as a woman's and whose voice can penetrate the recesses of the unseen.

### 9. The Widening Fields.

*Mark 6: 1-20.* In the opening paragraph of this chapter, we learn of hatred and rejection of those who had enjoyed the rich privileges of being the neighbors and associates of our Lord from his earliest days. They could not discern the divine in the human, the heavenly under the earthly veil. The Saviour, therefore, driven from their towns, goes about among the villages, depriving himself of the companionship of his disciples, in order to spread the good news as far as possible. The Lord is still in his Church through the Holy Spirit, but his power is limited and neutralized by our unbelief. It is useless to ask him to put forth his great power and save us, so long as we have made it practically impossible for him to do as we ask. The oldtime cry was: "Why shouldst thou be as a mighty man that cannot save?" The answer is supplied here: *He could do no*

*mighty work, . . . . and he marvelled at their unbelief.* Faith is our capacity for God, and there are several conditions for its nurture and growth.

With what simplicity the Twelve were started on their mission, v. 7. But with what authority they spoke! Simplicity and power are closely allied. The truly strong soul is not in need of the external surroundings and circumstances on which others lean; and in proportion to our willingness to deprive ourselves of the sources of human confidence may we lay hold on and possess divine power.

### 10. Martyrdom of a Witness-Bearer.

*Mark 6:21-29.* Better the dungeon with John than the palace with Herod, for conscience filled the palace with the ghost of the murdered Baptist! A woman brought Herod to that. How careful women should be of the influence they exert over men; how careful men should be of yielding to any but the noblest influence! This family was eaten with lust, usually coupled with cruelty. No vice ever dwells alone. John the Baptist had a brief and tortuous career; for a few months the central figure of the nation, and then hurled down into the darkness of the dungeon, like some extinguished torch. No wonder that his specter haunted the heart of Herod, who thought that in Jesus he had become reincarnate. The messenger may fall, but the message is taken up and passed on by a thousand lips. Notice the contrast between John's end and that of our Lord. In John's case the disciples who had hearkened to his every word dispersed. The head had fallen, and the members were scattered. None thought of proclaiming their departed leader as still the living head and center of the movement he had set on foot. But when our Lord died, his true influence over men began. Up to that time he had been the Jewish rabbi; thenceforward he became the Redeemer of the world.

### 11. The Sympathy and Compassion of Jesus.

*Mark 6:30-56.* When the Apostles returned they had much to tell. Some were flushed with success, others radiant with victory over demons, others, perhaps, overstrained and weary, and all needing the quiet, holy influence of repose and silence in the Lord's company. And in those quiet hours or days, as the fever passed out of them, he taught them memorable lessons of how he would feed the world by his Church, and how his people would be safe amid the storms that swept the sea, for always he would watch them from the height, and come to them at the moment when his help was most needed. Christ sits as host at the great table of the Church, and the meager resources of his servants yield the starting point for his multiplication of bread. He bids us go and consider how little we have, that we may properly estimate the greatness of his help. Notice how the upward look precedes the breaking and giving. There is enough for each, not of bread alone, but of fish; and the disciples are refreshed by another kind of ministry. So the Lord recreates us by turning exhausted energies into new channels. What threatens to overpower us brings Christ to our side. But his footsteps must be arrested, if we would have his company. Where Jesus is, storms cease and the sick are made whole.

### 12. Breaking the Bonds of Tradition.

*Mark 7:1-23.* The Pharisees laid great stress on ritual. They followed endless rules, both intricate and troublesome, as to ablutions and outward ceremonials. So long as their devotees were careful in the minor observances, they were permitted a wide license so far as the weightier matters of the Law were concerned. This is a natural tendency of the human heart. It is glad to be able to reduce its religious life to an outward and literal obedience, if only its thoughts may be unhampered. In the life of true holiness everything depends on the con-

trol of the thoughts. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." With infinite wisdom the wise man said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," and Jesus put "evil thoughts" first in the black category of the contents of the evil heart. A gang of thieves sometimes put a very small boy through a tiny window that he may unlock the front door. So one evil thought will often admit an entire crew of evil. Heart of mine, hast thou learned this lesson? Art thou careful enough of thy cleanliness? That the hands should be often washed, that vessels of household use should be kept cleansed, that there should be decorum and neatness in the outward life, all these customs are good. But it becomes thee to inquire whether thou art not more eager for the outward than the inward cleanliness. "Create in me a clean heart," should be thy constant prayer.

### 13. A Mother's Faith Rewarded.

*Mark 7:24-37.* Before faith can be fully exercised we must take the right attitude toward Christ. His mission at that time was to the Jewish people; they were the *children.* This woman had no claim as a child, and the question was whether she was prepared to take the lower place. It is the humble soul that has power with God, and when she showed herself prepared to put Jesus in his place as Lord, and to take her own place as willing to accept the children's crumbs, the Lord was able to put the key of his treasure house into her hand and bid her have her desire. Faith can wring blessing from an apparent negative, and use what might seem to be a rebuff to open God's treasuries.

In the following miracle, notice that upward look, that sigh, and that touch. These are the conditions of all successful religious work, and it is a great encouragement to faith that our Lord himself knew what it was by a look to draw down the mighty power of God. That upward look may be ours when it is impossible to kneel

for prolonged prayer. When we stand in the light of eternity, we also shall say, as our Lord's contemporaries did, "He hath done all things well."

### 14. The Demand for Signs Rebuked.

*Mark 8:1-21.* Notice the Master's tender considerateness, vs. 1-9. He would not have the people faint on their way home. There are distinct differences between this miracle and the feeding of the five thousand. Most of these are evident to the English reader, but that between the baskets used for the fragments is clear only from the original—those used in the case of the five thousand being quite different from the large ones used here, v. 20; Matt. 15:37. Our Lord never repeats his work.

The Saviour sighed in the previous chapter over physical need; here he sighs over moral obtuseness, vs. 10-21. The language is very strong, and gives a glimpse into the Redeemer's heart. Had the Pharisees been as willing to discern the signs of the age as to read the weather, they must have been able to recognize him and his claims; but their foolish heart was darkened. Having sighed over the hard-heartedness of the Pharisees, might he not equally have done so over the obtuseness of the Twelve? They thought that he was referring to their carelessness in omitting to take bread. How little they realized that the cause lay far deeper! Let us be quick to read the divine intention in very simple incidents, and to learn that all God's *past* dealings contain lessons for the *present!*

### 15. The Cost of Following Jesus.

*Mark 8:22—9:1.* Our attention has been drawn to the Master's sighs; here, however, was another characteristic act. He spat on the eyes of the blind man, perhaps to excite his expectation and faith. Repulsive as op-

thalmia is in the East, it did not repel him nor staunch the flow of his pity.

We do not at once see everything clearly, but step by step we come unto perfect vision. Here we see through a glass darkly, there face to face. There was a great price to be paid; it was only through suffering and death that Jesus could do his greatest work, in redeeming and cleansing the children of men. He might have been the miracle-worker apart from Calvary; but to be the Saviour, he must not spare himself but be willing to pour out his soul even unto death. It was hard for the Apostles to learn this lesson; they wanted the Master to spare himself. Peter, especially, sought to dissuade him; but the Lord knew better the desperate need of men and how it must be met. There are three conditions to be fulfilled by those who have resolved to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. 1. *We must deny self;* 2. *Each must take up his cross;* 3. *We must think more of others than of ourselves.* If these are realized, the soul is following Christ and making progress, even though it deems itself stagnant or drifting back.

### 16. Rapture and Service.

*Mark 9:2-29.* The Apostles had been gladdened by the promise of the coming Kingdom. The transfiguring light that shone from our Lord's face differed from the shining of Moses' face. With Moses the light was from without, and faded; but with Christ the light shone from within. Surely at that moment he might have stepped back into heaven by the open door, through which the representatives of the Law and the prophets had come; but he turned his back on the joy of the Father's home, and set his face to endure the cross, that he might become, not the example only, but the Redeemer of men. What a contrast between that scene on Hermon's slopes, where the glory of Jesus was brighter than the glistening snows about him, and that

below, where the demoniac child writhed in pain! Raphael does well to group these two incidents in one picture, for we are shown here that the duty of the Church is not to build tabernacles on the mount of vision, but to take her way into the haunts of crime and misery and cope with the power of Satan. Faith is the channel through which the divine power passes. Its quantity is of less importance than its quality. It may be minute as a mustard seed, but, like it, must contain the principle of life.

### 17. The Path to Greatness.

*Mark 9:30-50.* Such were the hopes awakened by the Transfiguration and the following miracles that the disciples were led to speculate upon their relative position in the Kingdom. Jesus therefore took a little child for his text, and preached to them a sermon on humility. How constantly the Master speaks of the little ones! He says that we must be converted to become like them; that to cause them to stumble will involve terrible penalties; that they are not to be despised; that each has an angel of the Father's presence-chamber appointed to his charge; that to seek and to save one he is prepared as the shepherd to traverse the mountains; that it is not the Father's will that one of them should perish. How infinitely tender and humble was his love for them!

Let us strive to cut off whatever causes us to stumble. It may be a friendship, a pastime, a pursuit, a course of reading; but there must be no quarter given, no excuse accepted. As soon as the soul dares to make this supreme renunciation, there is an accession of life. Whenever the body loses the use of one member, such as the eye, there is an accession of vigor in others; so, to deny the lower is to open the door to the higher, and, though maimed, to enter into life. Verses 44-48 evidently refer to the valley of Hinnom, where fires were kept burning to consume waste.

### 18. The Divine Law of Marriage.

*Mark 10: 1-22.* God made one man for one woman; therefore divorce is not permissible, unless the one act be committed which severs the nuptial tie. Then only is the bond broken by which husband and wife are one. There should be no compulsory celibacy. Some can live the single life; others cannot. Each must work out his own possibilities, and none may judge another.

It would appear that the *fathers* brought the little ones. They had a truer perception of the heart of Jesus than the disciples. All through the ages men have supposed that strength, wisdom, and wealth have the greatest attractions for our Lord, whereas it is precisely the reverse. Of *such* is his Kingdom.

Youth, with all its fervor and impetuosity, is very beautiful to the Lord Jesus. In this case it was combined with station, high standing, and wealth. It is not necessary that all should sell their goods, and give away the proceeds; indeed, it is often harder to retain and administer them rightly for God. But it was necessary for Christ to prove to this young man that he was not living the life of love, as he seemed to suppose. That alone can fulfil the law, and secure the highest and most perfect blessedness of which we are capable. It was a severe but necessary test for this young man.

### 19. True Riches and Real Greatness.

*Mark 10: 23-52.* Wealth brings many temptations. It is not said that rich men cannot get through the gate, but they will have to stoop very low and be stripped of the *love* of wealth, though not necessarily of wealth itself. In Christ's kingdom to give all is to get all. The surrendered life needs no pity, for what it loses on the material side is more than compensated by its enormous spiritual gains, vs. 30, 31. Perhaps the request of the two brethren was dictated rather by the desire to be near the Master than by ambition; but in any case there

is only one price to be paid. We must know the fellowship of his sufferings, if we are to share his glory, 2 Tim. 2:11, etc. It is easy to say, "We are able"; but had they not experienced the day of Pentecost, these two aspirants had certainly failed, Phil. 4:13. If you are not called to suffer with him, then serve. Service like Christ's will bring you near his throne, as will also a share in his suffering. With us as with Bartimæus, obstacles and difficulties should not daunt, but rather incite to more eager prayers. Christ is ever saying to men—*Courage!* Only faith could make a blind man cast away his garment, but he knew that he would be able to find it again with the sight that Jesus would certainly bestow.

### 20. Praise and Fear Greet Jesus' Approach.

*Mark 11:1-19.* On the first day of Passion Week a gleam of light fell athwart the Master's path as he rode into Jerusalem. It was a lowly triumph. The humble ass was escorted by poor men, Galilæan pilgrims, and children, who excited the haughty criticism of the metropolis. May a similar procession enter your heart and mine! "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."

With irresistible might the Lord drove forth the buyers and sellers from the Temple. According to the ancient prediction, he sat as a refiner and purifier of silver, to purify the sons of Levi. And whenever he enters the heart, he performs a similar work. He drives out bestial forms of sin, and mere traffic, so that the whole nature—spirit, soul, and body—may be surrendered to God. What our Lord said of the Temple should be true of each church of the living God. It should be his residence, where men of all nationalties should come to a unity, as they worship, confess sin, and intercede. Certainly God's house must not be a place of merchandise and traffic.

### 21. The Conditions of Prayer.

*Mark 11:20-33.* The great lesson taught by this stricken tree justified its doom. It was not yet the time of the fig harvest, but some of last year's fruit might still be found; and the hope of this was still further aroused by the abundance of young leaves. It was a type of profession without performance. In addition to proclaiming the doom of promise which is not followed by performance, our Lord drew from the miracle the great lesson that faith can absolutely reckon on God's faith, that is, his faithfulness. Throughout his life, as we look into the heart of Jesus, we find only forgiving love, humility, faith. Forgiveness and love are the conditions of all successful prayers, vs. 24-26. We do not show sufficient appreciation for our Lord's marvelous intellectual power. He was more than equal to these clever intellects trained to argument. They were beaten at their own game.

### 22. Jesus Silences His Enemies.

*Mark 12:1-27.* Our Lord reviews the history of the theocracy. He recounts the long roll of God's servants who had been persecuted and misused from the first to the last, including *himself*. In doing so, he openly implied that he was the Son of God and made the Pharisees realize how clearly he foresaw the fate which they were preparing for him. They were accustomed to apply Ps. 118:22 to the Messiah, and recognized at once what Jesus meant, when he claimed it as an emblem of his own rejection.

How admirably our Lord defined the relations of his Kingdom to the civil power! If we accept Cæsar's protection and ordered government we are bound to maintain it by money payment and such other service as conscience permits. This indeed is part of our duty to God; and with equal care we must give him the dues of the spiritual world.

Jesus silenced the Sadducees by a quotation from the Pentateuch, whose authority they admitted. God could not be the God of persons not in existence. Therefore since he used the present tense of his relationship with the patriarchs in speaking to Moses three hundred years after their death, they must have been still in existence.

### 23. The First Commandment.

*Mark 12: 28-44.* To the young ruler our Lord named one command as great—the love of one's neighbor. Now, in answer to this scribe, he turned with unerring choice, first to Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5, and then to Leviticus 19: 18, for the two pillars on which the collective and individual life of man must rest. The reverent answer of the scribe proves that he was no ordinary questioner; and our Lord acknowledged this when he told him that a few steps more would bring him into the kingdom of God. Our Lord was David's son by human descent, but as Son of God, proceeding from the Father, he is exalted far above David and all mankind.

In terrible words, vs. 38-40, Christ denounced the moral and religious leaders of the time. They made a pretense and a gain of their religion. How great the contrast between them and this poor widow, who cast into God's treasury all that she had to provide for her day's living! Our Lord is quick to notice acts like these, which give evidence of the true heart.

### 24. Coming Tribulations.

*Mark 13: 1-13.* Our Lord departed from the Temple, never again to enter its sacred precincts or to open his mouth in public teaching. When he withdrew, the whole system of Judaism was given over to desolation, and the predictions spoken at this time were minutely fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem under Titus. The Temple was blotted out—indeed, a ploughshare passed over its site; the people were sold into slavery or butchered in

the gladiatorial shows; their nationality was obliterated; and their land given to strangers. For more than eighteen centuries the holy places have been defiled.

Christ's words contain a further reference to his second advent. The signs here mentioned were carefully scanned by the early Christians, as one after another they were fulfilled. They saw the Roman world convulsed by rival claimants for the imperial purple; they knew by bitter experience the brunt of the world's hatred; they realized that by the labors of the great apostle of the Gentiles, and others, the gospel had been preached throughout the known world—and when these signs were being fulfilled, and the Roman eagles gathered to prey on the carcass of Judaism, from which the life had passed, they hastened to flee to Pella, from whence they beheld the collapse of the Jewish state.

## 25. "Watch!"

*Mark 13:14-37. The fall of Jerusalem,* vs. 14-23. This abomination had been predicted by Daniel, 9:27, Josephus says that the Romans brought their standards into the Temple, and offered sacrifices to them, and proclaimed Titus emperor. Probably there is to be a yet further fulfilment of these significant words. Houses in the East are, for the most part, provided with staircases outside the wall, so that the occupants, seeing the approach of danger, could flee without going through their homes, v. 15. The ungodly owe more than they realize to the elect who dwell among them, v. 20. Let us not be deceived by the appearance of false doctrines or teachers; there are also false Christs, v. 22. *The second advent,* vs. 24-27. These signs may refer to the disorganization of political rule, or to literal convulsions of the elements. The ministry of angels was very real to Jesus, and their function in the future ages is clearly defined. As Enoch was translated before the deluge, so will the saints be gathered before the final sorrows, 1

Thess. 4: 14-17. It would seem as if Christ's coming is to bring *summer* to our world. *This generation* may refer to the fact that the Jewish people would remain as a distinct people. Our Lord had so emptied himself, that in his human nature he knew not the hour, and was content to know only as the Father told him. He has now resumed the glory of the knowledge which he had before all worlds. Have we each one found our work? Let us watch!

### 26. An Offering of Love.

*Mark 14:1-16.* This beautiful incident took place on the Tuesday evening of Passion Week, while the chief priests were gathered in the house of Caiaphas to plot the Lord's death, Matt. 26: 3-5. Simon had probably been healed by Jesus, and the feast was held in his house, as being larger than Martha's. Jesus was intimate with Lazarus and his sisters, and this unnamed woman was Mary, John 12: 2, 3. Alabaster resembled white marble, and the perfume was carefully sealed to preserve it. Its cost would amount to about fifty dollars, and would represent the work of three hundred days, Matt. 20: 2. Loveless hearts cannot understand the expenditure of love—they count it waste; but how quickly Jesus steps in to vindicate his own! Probably, of all his followers, Mary alone had understood his references to his death, and as she could not be present to perform the last offices of love, she rendered them in advance. Judas, who led the murmuring, seems to have been goaded to this act by the contrast of Mary's spirit with his own, and by Christ's gentle rebuke.

The two sent to prepare the Passover were Peter and John, Luke 22: 8. We may often be guided by very trivial incidents—let us look out for them. A straw may indicate the direction of the current. The owner of the room was probably a secret disciple of Jesus, like him who lent the ass. The R.V. says, "*my* guest-chamber." It is very beautiful when the Master feels free to put his

hand on our possessions, and claim their use. Does he not ask for the guest chamber of our inner life? Is it at his disposal?

### 27. The Last Supper.

*Mark 14:17-31.* The two disciples made their preparations, returned to Bethany, and later the whole company came in together. The simple meal, consisting of the Passover lamb, unleavened cakes, bitter herbs, and wine, proceeded in the usual way, interspersed with the singing of the Hallel, Pss. 113-118. How well it is when we do not need the accusation, "Thou art the man," because we utter the inquiry, *Is it I?* Those whose hearts misgive them are not likely to commit the deed of treachery. At the institution of the Lord's Supper, vs. 22-25, Jesus gave thanks for the bread and the wine, Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24. We must understand his words in v. 22 in the same sense as when he says, "I am the door of the sheep." Those who receive the outward elements worthily partake, at the same time, spiritually of the things which they signify. Let us never fail to remember at the Lord's Supper, that it is the sign and seal of the new covenant into which God has entered with Christ on our behalf. See Heb. 8. For v. 27 compare Zech. 13:7. The energy of our own resolution is not enough to carry us through the supreme ordeals of trial. We need the Holy Spirit for that. Mark alone mentions the warning of the *double* cock-crow.

### 28. Alone in the Hour of Trial.

*Mark 14:32-52.* When the soul is overwhelmed, it seeks to be alone, and yet not too far from human sympathy and help. The three most trusted might enter the enclosure, but even they could not share the depth of the Master's anguish, which was so great as to threaten his very life. He cried to him who could save him from dying before his trial and sentence, and was saved from what he feared. Our Lord did not shrink from physical

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suffering, but from the horror of becoming sin-bearer for the race, and putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. His disciples failed him, but as he submitted to the Father's will his spirit rose triumphant. *Sleep on now*—the past is irrevocable. The disciples fled as fast as their feet would carry them. If only they had prayed, they would have been steadfast and unmovable. There are good reasons for supposing that the young man mentioned here was Mark himself.

### 29. A Mockery of Justice.

*Mark 14:53-72.* A commission of the chief priests awaited the result of the treachery of Judas at the house of Caiaphas. They had made up their minds what to do, but the form of a trial was necessary. The false witnesses were obviously unable to establish a sufficient case, and our Lord maintained a dignified silence. It was too much for Caiaphas, and he put his prisoner on his oath. Our Lord made no attempt to parry the issue or turn aside from the challenge, but replied: *I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* See Ps. 110:1; Dan. 7:13. Then followed a shameful scene, v. 65. But our Lord was as self-restrained in the use of his mighty powers as if he had been one of the most helpless of men. The graphic story of the denial, which took place at the time of the trial in the servants' hall, was probably given to the evangelist by Peter himself. What a contrast between the strength of the Master and the weakness of the disciple! Yet Peter was forgiven and made the Apostle of the Pentecost! We may have hope!

### 30. The Choice of the Multitude.

*Mark 15:1-21.* The hurried consultation of the evening was followed by the more formal meeting of the early morning; and even the decision made then had

no binding force till ratified by Pilate, the Roman governor, who happened at that time to be in Jerusalem. John gives a more detailed account of this memorable interview, 18: 33-38. Our Lord did not plead his own cause but committed himself to the One who judges righteously, 1 Pet. 2: 23. It was only when Pilate asked questions for his own guidance that Jesus sought to help him and then he relapsed into silence. "Like a sheep dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth." Men like Barabbas, embodiments of brute force, are ever the darlings of the crowd. By narrowing the people's choice to the murderer and Jesus, Pilate expected to bring them to demand the release of the lover and helper of men. But he failed to gauge the malice of which men are capable. Perhaps he hoped that the marks of extreme suffering would soften their hatred. As well appeal to a pack of hungry wolves! His *purple* stood for royalty won by blood; *thorns*, because his diadem was won by suffering; the *reed*, because he can wield the frailest life to momentous issues. Happy is the man who shares Christ's cross! Simon was an African, probably colored, and this incident changed his life, Rom. 16: 13.

### 31. A King upon His Cross.

*Mark 15: 22-47.* Our Lord refused to drink the potion prepared by the women of Jerusalem, in order to stupefy those who were crucified and so deaden the sense of pain, because he would drain the cup to its dregs. It was nine o'clock in the morning when he was nailed to the cross. His persecutors were, as they thought, destroying the Temple of which he had spoken in John 2: 19, and making its restoration impossible. In fact, however, they were giving him the opportunity of fulfilling his great prediction. *He saved others; himself he cannot save.* Nature veiled her face from that awful spectacle. Christ was not really forsaken, but as our Redeemer he passed under the dark shadow of human sin.

The access to the Holy of Holies is now forever free through the entry of our great High Priest. See Heb. 9:7, 8. What love inspired the women, v. 40, to brave the horrors of the scene! And how good to see that God cares for the body as well as for the spirit of his beloved! For Joseph, see Matt. 27:57 and Luke 23:50, 51. Born of the Virgin's womb our Lord was buried in a a virgin tomb.

### 32. The Power of His Resurrection.

*Mark 16.* In the dim light the women brave the dangers of an Eastern city and hasten to the grave. How often we seek Christ in the grave of old experiences or of dead and empty rites; and how often we cherish fears for which there is no occasion! In the grave where Christ had lain a young man was sitting, arrayed in a glistening robe; so out of death comes life. And one result of the Saviour's resurrection has been that myriads of noble youths, clothed in garments of purity, have gone forth to shine like the dewdrops of the morning sparkling on the bosom of the earth. God's angels are always young. We who are the children of the Resurrection in the life of eternity will grow always younger, as here our bodies are ever growing older. The ministry of Galilee and Jerusalem is at an end, but the spirit of the Master goes forth to new victories in the Acts of the Apostles. Note the mighty power of faith, the signs that follow its manifestation in simplicity and purity; demons cannot resist it, serpents are rendered harmless, and healing streams flow from contact with it. Let us keep our eyes fixed on the risen Christ sitting at the right hand of God, and believe that he is ever working by our side and confirming our words, Heb. 2:4.

(*For Review Questions see next page.*)

# REVIEW QUESTIONS ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

## OUTLINE.

(*a*) What aspect of the ministry of Christ is set forth in the Gospel according to Mark?
(*b*) How may the book be subdivided?
(*c*) Mention some special incidents showing forth the power of Christ.

## INTRODUCTION.

(*d*) Where and between what dates was the Gospel according to Mark probably written?
(*e*) What is believed to account for the graphic nature of the narrative?

## SECTIONS 1–32. CHAPTERS 1–16.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

1. What man was sent of God to prepare the way for Christ?
2. What word may be taken as the keynote of this Gospel?
3. What two miracles show that Jesus is both able and willing to forgive sin?
4. For whom did God make the Sabbath?
5. What teaching is contained in the parable of the sower?
6. What resemblance is found between the kingdom of God and the mustard seed?
7. What incident reveals the power of Jesus over unclean spirits?
8. Which of the disciples witnessed the raising of Jairus' little daughter? What miracle of healing took place on the way to the ruler's house?
9. Who did King Herod think Jesus must be? Why did this thought make Herod afraid?
10. What were the circumstances leading to the murder of John the Baptist?

11. What encouragement is given "the little talent" in the feeding of the five thousand?
12. Where must cleansing from sin begin?
13. To what particular people was Jesus' earthly mission? What miracle did he perform for a Gentile?
14. What differences may be noted in the feeding of the four thousand and that of the five thousand?
15. In what way does the healing of this blind man differ from other miracles of Jesus?
16. Which of the disciples were privileged to witness the Transfiguration? Who talked with Jesus?
17. What sermon did Jesus preach with a little child as his text?
18. What is the teaching of Jesus concerning marriage? Why should children be encouraged to come to Jesus?
19. What is the teaching of Jesus regarding the love of riches? regarding true greatness?
20. What was the manner of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem?
21. What are the conditions of successful prayer?
22. What was the view of the Sadducees concerning the resurrection of the body? How did they seek to entrap Jesus? What was his answer?
23. What summary of the Ten Commandments is given by Jesus?
24. What warnings of coming tribulation did Jesus utter?
25. What great event would follow? What should be the attitude of the Christian?
26. What beautiful incident took place in the house of Simon the leper? What did Jesus say of this act of love?
27. How and when was instituted the Lord's Supper?
28. What friends did Jesus wish near him in his agony in the garden? How did he excuse their failing to watch with him?
29. Which only of the high priest's questions did Jesus answer?
30. What person helped Jesus carry his cross?
31. What were the mocking words of the chief priests? What glorious truth did they unintentionally convey?
32. By whom was the Resurrection announced? To what women? What special message were they to bear?

# III

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE



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# OUTLINE OF
# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE
## THE HUMAN LIFE OF THE SON OF GOD


PREFACE .....1: 1-4.

I. BIRTH AND BEGINNINGS .....1: 5—2: 52.
1. *Birth of the Forerunner*.....1: 5-25; 57-80.
2. *Birth of Jesus* .....1: 26-56; 2: 1-20.
3. *Infancy and Development*....2: 21-52.

II. THE LIFE DEVOTED TO HUMAN NEED .3: 1—18: 30.
1. *Ministry of the Forerunner*...3: 1-20.
2. *Baptism and Temptation of Jesus* .....3: 21, 22; 4: 1-13.
(*Genealogy*, 3: 23-38.)
3. *The Galilaean Ministry* .....4: 14—9: 50.
*Choice of the twelve apostles, sermon on the plain, miracles of many kinds.*
4. *Journey toward Jerusalem*....9: 51—18: 30.
*Sending out of the Seventy, parables teaching prayer, mercy, and judgment.*

III. THE LIFE REJECTED BY HUMAN HATRED .....18: 31—22: 7.
1. *Last Journey to Jerusalem*....18: 31—19: 27.
2. *Triumphal Entry—Cleansing of the Temple* .....19: 28-48.
3. *Parables of Judgment, Questions, Teaching about Last Things* .....20: 1—21: 38.
4. *The Bargain of Judas*.....22: 1-7.

IV. THE LIFE SACRIFICED FOR HUMAN SIN .....22: 7—23: 56.
1. *The Last Supper and the Agony in the Garden* .....22: 7-46.
2. *The Betrayal* .....22: 47-53.
3. *The Jewish and Roman Trials*.22: 54—23: 25.
4. *The Crucifixion and Burial*....23: 26-56.

V. THE LIFE REMANIFESTED AND GLORIFIED .....24: 1-53.
1. *Visit of Women to Tomb*.....24: 1-12.
2. *Walk to Emmaus* .....24: 13-35.
3. *Appearance to the Eleven*....24: 36-49.
4. *The Ascension* .....24: 50-53.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

*The third Gospel is the longest. It was probably written in Greece, for Greek-speaking people, by Luke, a Gentile physician, who had not been an eye-witness of the facts he describes, but had taken great pains to acquaint himself with the facts as related to him by eye-witnesses. See 1:1-4. The old tradition is that Luke wrote under the direction of Paul, whose companion he was after the events narrated in Acts 16.*

*It has been described as the most carefully composed of the three narrative Gospels; and is the reply to questionings that would naturally present themselves to cultured men who had been impressed with the strange beauty of the Cross. No one could understand better than the great Apostle the need of an exhaustive reply to such questionings, and of an authoritative history of the rise and progress of the gospel of Christ. Luke dwells specially on the early incidents of our Lord's life, and some have detected in the Greek forms of the sentences the direct recital of Mary as she recounted to Luke those sacred recollections which she pondered in her heart. There are many places where Luke uses medical terms, etc., which the other Gospels do not mention, and which show his training as a physician.*

*Luke addresses himself to show the universality of Christ's gospel. He ignores all privilege of race, or caste or training, and traces back our Lord's genealogy to Adam. It is thus that he, of all the evangelists, dwells on the message of the Baptist: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." In the same spirit he tells the parables of chapter 15, as well as that of the marriage supper; and contrasts the ingratitude of the nine Jewish lepers with the gratitude of the Samaritan. It is especially the Gospel of hope and love, of pity and faith.*

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

## 1. The Beginning of the Good News.

*Luke 1: 1-12.* The opening verses are very explicit. They are answer enough to those who question the story of our Lord's supernatural birth and early years. Luke did not catch up the first legend that floated past him. He made searching inquiry. Doctor Weymouth renders the words in v. 3, "having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first," as, "After careful examination of the facts from the commencement."

That our Lord should come into our race under special and supernatural conditions was as it should have been; but the historicity of this story largely rests on the careful investigations of "the beloved physician," who was authenticated by Paul.

The priests were divided into 24 courses, and shared the Temple services for a week each, the work of each priest being decided by lot, 1 Chron. 24. Sweeter than the incense which he sprinkled on the coals, was Zacharias' own prayer, commemorated in the name given to his son, "God's gracious gift," Exod. 30: 7, 8; Rev. 8: 3, etc.

## 2. The Forerunner.

*Luke 1: 13-25.* As we open this Gospel we feel the wealth of a new age. The country was full of anarchy, misrule and wild passion, but there were many who "spoke often one to another," Mal. 3: 16. They were the quiet in the land, who "were looking for the redemption of Israel," Luke 2: 38.

The separation of the Nazirite was in ordinary cases temporary and voluntary; but Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist were Nazirites from their birth. As the leper was the living symbol of *sin,* so was the Nazirite of *holiness.* No alcohol, no razor, no ceremonial defilement, Num. 6. The mission of the Baptist was to bring

back the ancient spirit of religion and prepare Messiah's way.

Notice Gabriel's great and noble position of standing before God, and compare 1 Kings 10:8; 1 Kings 17:1; Luke 21:36. Unbelief robs us of the power of testimony for Jesus. But when faith is in full exercise, the tongue of the dumb sings.

### 3. The Promised Messiah.

*Luke 1:26-38.* The narrative is artlessly simple and natural and is its own complete vindication. No human genius could have invented it. Compare it, for instance, with all the ornate and fantastic pictures of the Annunciation by the great masters! That little children and wise men alike appreciate this story bespeaks its humanness and its divineness.

It is to the humble and childlike maiden that the supreme honor of womanhood is given. The choice was one of pure grace. The Creator-Spirit himself wrought this divine miracle. The appearance of our Saviour among mankind was the direct and immediate act of Deity, so far as his body was concerned, but as to his spirit, it was the voluntary emptying on his own part, of which Paul speaks, Phil. 2:7. "The word *became* flesh." It was not a transient assumption of the appearance of humanity, but a real fusion of the divine and the human in that holy thing which was to be born. Here was the beginning of a new humanity, to be reproduced in all that believe, till the earth is filled with the "sons of God," Rom. 8:14.

### 4. The Song of the Virgin Mother.

*Luke 1:39-56.* Zacharias lived in a Levitical city in the hill country of Judah. The narrative evidently implies that there had been no previous communication between the two women of what had happened. In their greeting both were led and taught of the Spirit.

Evidently Mary was living in close familiarity with

THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM. Luke 2: 1-7.

From Painting by WILLIAM HOLE. Modern British Artist.

the Scriptures. Often she had been deeply moved by their radiant promises, and had pleaded that God would at last help his people and send the Saviour. Now that this blessing had come to her, she voiced her thanks, not only under the express inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but in the familiar expressions of Scripture. No others would have sufficed. Compare Hannah's song of praise, under similar circumstances, 1 Sam. 2: 1-10. This song is called the *Magnificat,* that being the first word in the Latin version. Wonder and praise, humility and exultation, adoration and congratulation—these colors chase one another in the heart of this jewel.

### 5. The Song at the Herald's Birth.

*Luke 1: 57-80.* This song is second only to that of Mary. It is a noble ode, tracing our Lord's advent back to the early covenant of God with the fathers and anticipating its effects to the end of time.

It is wholesome to apply the song to ourselves and ask how far we have participated in these great blessings. Are we experiencing this daily salvation from our spiritual enemies, who hate us? Do we serve God without the slavish fear of the serf, and with the loyal allegiance of the child? Are all our days characterized by holiness toward God and righteousness toward man? Has the "dayspring from on high" visited *our* hearts and are our feet walking in the way of peace? Solemn questions these, but they must be faced.

### 6. The Saviour of Mankind Is Born.

*Luke 2: 1-14.* The manger bed and its precious occupant are among the most cherished memories of our childhood; but as we come there in later life, the wonder ever grows. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh," 1 Tim. 3: 16.

What company we meet there! Shepherds with their naive wonder; angels from the realms of glory; wise men with their gifts; aged saints like Simeon and Anna.

Surely the desire of all nations is here! Let us ask that the Lord of glory will condescend to be born in the mean stable of our heart, transforming it into a palace!

Notice how, to bring Mary to Bethlehem, the Master of all emperors sets on foot the machinery of providence and history. What can he not do for us and his Church!

### 7. Welcomed; Named; Presented.

*Luke 2: 15-24.* From April till the autumn the flocks pastured at night in the open fields, from which it seems probable that our Lord must have been born earlier or later than December. No doubt these shepherds were, like Simeon, "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and their purity of life and simplicity of soul well qualified them to receive the blessed tidings of the angels. First simplicity and afterward science, Matt. 2, found their way into the presence of Jesus.

In the act of circumcision, our Lord admitted his obligation to fulfil the whole Law, Gal. 5: 3. He was "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," Gal. 4:4, 5. Mary could afford only the gift of the poor, Lev. 12: 6-8; 5: 7-11; 2 Cor. 8: 9. The precious name of Jesus—Saviour—is the name above every name, Acts 4: 10-12.

### 8. The Aged Simeon's Prophetic Blessing.

*Luke 2: 25-39.* Two aged watchers welcomed the King; but no one else, of all the crowds who went and came, guessed that the Messenger of the Covenant had suddenly come to his Temple, Mal. 3: 1-3.

In the Arctic Circle in summer the visitor will behold the magnificent spectacle, on the same sky, of the hues of sunset and of dawn. Dipping only for a brief period beneath the horizon, the setting sun leaves the glorious trail of sunset, and rising, bathes the eastern clouds with the radiance of dawn. So, when Simeon embraced Christ, sunset and sunrise met. There was the glory of

the age that was passing, and the glory of the new Christian age that shall ever stand at perfect noon.

Note the concentric circles of Simeon's character: a man; a man in Jerusalem—*i. e.*, a Jew; righteous toward his fellows; devout toward God; looking; Spirit-anointed; to whom it was revealed; Christ in his arms. What more could be said?

### 9. The Boy Jesus in the Temple.

*Luke 2: 40-52.* "Solitary floweret," says Stier, referring to this incident, "gathered from the wonderful enclosed garden of the thirty years and plucked precisely when the swollen bud, at the age of twelve years, was about to burst into flower."

The incident is specially valuable as indicating so perfect an understanding between our Lord and his mother. He wondered that, knowing him as she did, she could have lost him, or should have failed to seek him in his Father's house. The stress is on *Wist ye not?* Here, however, he seemed to pass into a new attitude toward his life-work. May we not say that he caught sight of its absorbing character, to which all else must be subordinated?

Let us never *suppose* that we are in the company of Jesus, when, in fact, we may have lost him. Never rest till you and he have found each other!

### 10. A Preacher of Righteousness.

*Luke 3: 1-14.* The evangelist sets an emperor, a governor, two high priests, and three tetrarchs in a few lines, as of very subordinate interest, compared with the one man, the child of the desert, whose coming dated a new era and to whom he devotes the remainder of the chapter. After all, it is religious men who really make the history of mankind.

"The word of God *came* unto John the Baptist . . . and he *came*." That is the true order. Get your message and then come. It is often in the wilderness of life that

God's words find us. The man who is going to master men must first master the appetites of his own body. If you seek popularity, you will lose it; if you seek to do God's will, men will almost certainly come to find you. Souls require a clear pane of glass, when they look out on the infinite expanse of the sky! Be real! Live at first-hand with eternal truth! Fear not the face of man!

### 11. The Herald Silenced; the Messiah Appears.

*Luke 3:15-23.* We are told that the time of John's appearance was the Sabbatic year, when field-work was suspended, and the people had comparative leisure. In his passion for God, reality and truth, John asked for nothing of men; but men were willing to give him anything. The impression he made on his age was due to his selfless devotion to the coming Kingdom and its King. The great cities emptied themselves into the Jordan valley. The youth of Gennesaret left their fishing boats to sit at his feet. The "spirit and power of Elijah" rested on him. All classes felt that he could speak to their needs, and submitted to his direction.

But how abashed his bearing before Jesus! The voice that had swept the crowds like a whirlwind sank to whispers. Our Lord took him into fellowship—"it becometh *us*." The porter opened the door and recognized that it was the true Shepherd who passed in, John 1:32-34.

### 12. The Threefold Temptation.

*Luke 4:1-13.* As the waters of Jordan bisect the Holy Land, so does our Lord's baptism bisect his holy life. In that act he had identified himself with the world's sin; and now, as the High Priest who was to deal with sin and sinners, he must be "in all points" tempted and tested "like as we are."

He took into the wilderness a perfect humanity of flesh and blood, made in all points like his brethren, though without sin. He elected to fight his great fight,

not by the use of the divine attributes, but as Son of man. Where the first Adam fell, the second must stand.

*First,* he could not use his native power for his own gratification. *Second,* he would abide strictly within the limitations of the world he had entered, Heb. 2: 16, 17. *Third,* he would win his kingdom by the Cross.

### 13. "His Own Received Him Not."

*Luke 4: 14-30.* A wide gap occurs here, embracing the important transactions of John 1: 29—4: 54.

What a flutter in Mary's heart when she saw her son sitting in the teacher's place of his native synagogue! How gratified at the reception given to the opening sentences! What a sword pierced her heart at the sudden revulsion of feeling! They were jealous that he performed only a few private miracles; but he could not do more because of their unbelief. See Mark 6: 5.

Note that our Lord here sounded forth the silver trumpet of jubilee. Seizing on the imagery of the gladdest festival of Hebrew life, he likened himself to a priest proclaiming *the acceptable year of the Lord.* Not yet the day of vengeance! Compare v. 19 with Isa. 61: 1, 2. This is Christ's program for the present age.

### 14. Healer and Preacher.

*Luke 4: 31-44.* In after years the evil spirit cried out, "Jesus I know," Acts 19: 15. Evidently our Lord was not only "seen of angels," but closely watched by the fallen spirits, who beheld his every act and listened to every word. What a remarkable verdict was that given in v. 34! Those who know most of evil are most certain of the ultimate woe which awaits its votaries; and they know genuine goodness when they meet it. Our Lord had overcome the prince of demons, and could therefore command his household.

We need to be delivered from the fever of passion, caught in the low-lying marshes of our lives; to have Christ's hands laid upon our sicknesses and wounds; to

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be delivered from evil things that haunt our hearts. Then we must help him in similar services to others. But if he must have his quiet prayer times, so must we, v. 42.

### 15. New Catchers of Men.

*Luke 5: 1-11.* Not their first call, recorded in John 1: 35-42, but another which preceded their appointment to the apostolate.

The Lord always supersedes us. He superseded Peter in his command of the boat, which he had navigated since he was a lad. There is always a testing-point for the soul. Will you surrender the command and let Christ be captain? If so, in the teeth of great difficulties—for fish are not caught generally in the glare of day—he will fill your boat to the water's edge. He does beyond all we asked or thought.

Christ will be in no man's debt. If you lend him your boat, he will return it filled with silver fish. The boats were filled; the upper room was filled with the Holy Spirit; and all Martha's hospitality was well repaid when Lazarus was raised.

At the day of Pentecost, when Peter's net landed 3,000 souls, was not our Lord's promise fulfilled? "Thrust out a *little,*" is the beginning of long voyages and fishing expeditions with Christ!

### 16. Cleansing, Power and Pardon.

*Luke 5: 12-26.* Jesus did not hesitate to touch the leper, because he could no more be polluted by uncleanness than could a ray of light by passing through a fetid atmosphere. The question is never in *can* or *will,* as applied to Christ, but whether WE *will* trust him and *can* believe.

The Mosaic offering was a pair of birds, one of which was killed over running water; while the other, having been dipped into this mingled blood and water, was freed to fly away in its native air. Is not this the meet emblem of the forgiven and cleansed soul? See Lev. 14: 2-32.

At first the bed bore the paralytic, but after the power of Jesus had entered into him, he bore the bed. So Jesus pours his energy into our anæmic natures, and we master what had mastered us. The miracle in the physical sphere, which men could test, approved his power in the realm of the spiritual, where only the forgiven one could actually *know*.

Do not forget to withdraw from the crowd, however eager it is, that you may pray, v. 16.

### 17. Feasting and Fasting.

*Luke 5:27-39.* Matthew in his Gospel says nothing of this great feast; the Spirit of God saw that it should not be forgotten. "When saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee?" Matt. 25:37. Advertise yourself and God will leave you unnoticed. You will have had your reward. Be content to do things, as Jesus appointed, and Matthew 6:4 will follow.

Let us not cling to the broken bottle-skins of the past, whether they be out-worn ceremonies, creeds or formulations of truth. Let the ferment of each great religious movement and new era express itself in its own way. We must not encourage the ill-judged speed of those who want to force the pace, and fling away the bottle-skins before they are done with. But if the bottle-skins have evidently served their purpose and lie discarded on the ground, that will not affect the vintage, which is reddening on the hills. Go and pick the fruit God is giving you, place it carefully in baskets and let it have new skins.

### 18. The Right Use of the Sabbath.

*Luke 6:1-11.* It was a brave and bold step for Jesus to set himself against the ritualistic proscriptions of the ruling religious party of his age. How many who had hoped that he would redeem Israel, must have been hurt by what seemed to be ruthless iconoclasm. But there was no hope of the holy thoughts of God ever emerging from the mass of hide-bound rules and regulations with

which the Pharisees had covered them, unless the frost of literalism was broken up with a strong hand. Christ was not destroying religion, but freeing it from the formalist. Reality, reality! Be true and real!

The grave question today is, whether, in our revolt from Puritan strictness in observing Sunday, we have not gone to the other extreme. The Church of God will have to stand for God's day, not only for God's sake, but for the sake of the masses, who are menaced by a seven-days' working week. The Sabbath was made for man; he needs it. If God made it for him, let God's children preserve it.

### 19. New Leaders and New Principles.

*Luke 6:12-26.* There are three circles here: *First,* Christ and his Apostles—the men who were to be sent into all the world to preach the gospel and to lay the foundations of the Church. How little did these single men imagine that one day their names would become inscribed on the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem!

The *next* circle is that of the disciples, v. 17. You must be a disciple before you can be an apostle. You must learn, if you are to teach. You must sit at the feet of Jesus, till some day he calls you out from the class and commissions you to the world. The sheep becomes a shepherd.

The *third* great outer rim is the poor, needy world. What a gathering of sick folk! But if only people knew the distempers of their soul-life they would gather with equal eagerness to Jesus. How wonderful that secret touch! v. 19. But many still touch him in the press!

### 20. How to Treat Our Fellow-Men.

*Luke 6:27-38.* Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount differs from that of Matthew, only as each views the great discourse from his own standpoint. By one it is viewed as the manifesto of the King; by the other, as the proclamation of "the Man Christ Jesus" to man.

Notice the secret of blessedness! Here is the draught-

sketch of a life of abounding blessing, overflowing with mercy and lovingkindness. With what measure we mete out our love to men, they will measure back their love to us, using our own measures for the purpose.

Each of these Beatitudes is a gateway into blessedness. It is not that blessedness is the reward of virtue, but it is the necessary and invariable result. Only we must be good, because it is right and God-pleasing to be so, and the blessedness will be as natural as the bloom on the peach.

### 21. The Test That Reveals Character.

*Luke 6:39-49.* Yes, it is true! Some day we shall be perfected. The long discipline will be over, and we shall be able to close our lesson books and go home. We shall then be found to be like Christ, our Lord. The promise of v. 40 is very beautiful, though it sometimes seems far away.

We need to look at home first, before we essay to judge or condemn others. It is blundering waste to deal with other people's eyes if you have a defect in yours. Color-blind men ought not to run trains. Speech betrayeth men; what they say, that they are. The man who is quickest to judge and discuss the faults of another does so because of his own experience of the same sin. How else could he know so much about it?

The rock is not the Church, nor doctrine, nor even the Bible, but *Christ,* Isa. 28:16.

### 22. An Alien's Surprising Faith.

*Luke 7:1-10.* It is interesting to find these wild flowers of natural faith, humility and love growing outside the carefully cultured garden of the Hebrew religion. God has never been without witnesses among the nations. We recall Cyrus in the Old Testament, Isa. 45:1-7; and Cornelius in the New, Acts 10:1-8. "In every nation." See Acts 10:35. But of course the propitiation of Christ underpins the salvation of all men, Rom. 3:25.

Because the centurion was under the authority of Rome and was loyally obedient to it, he was able to exercise authority; and since he was so sure that Christ was obedient and loyal to God, he felt that HE, too, was able to exert authority over all other forces, especially those which were injuring and torturing human lives. Let us seek to be such obedient servants that Christ may be able to say to us also, with the absolute certainty that we shall obey, *"Go"* and *"Come"* and especially *"Do this."*

### 23. "God Hath Visited His People."

*Luke 7: 11-23.* Nain lay near the plain of Esdraelon, on the slopes of Little Hermon. Two confluent streams met there—those with Christ and those with death, vs. 11 and 12. He wipes away tears by removing the cause. When the young are being borne by their young companions to graves of sin, it is thus that the Master arrests them. See Eph. 5: 14. There was a threefold gradation in the power he put forth—to Jairus' daughter, just dead; to this young man, on the way to burial; and to Lazarus, who was three days dead. The depression from John's long confinement in the gloomy fortress of Machærus, east of the Dead Sea, and the fact that Jesus had not sent to deliver him, were the double root of this sad lapse from the position taken up on the Jordan bank, when he recognized and indicated the Lamb of God. But our Lord did not chide; he understood, Ps. 103: 9. His miracles of mercy and power are his best evidences, and he left John to draw his own conclusions, Isa. 35: 5, 6. May ours be the blessedness of the unoffended, who will trust Christ, even though he does not hasten to deliver them just as they had hoped!

### 24. A Great Man and a Still Greater.

*Luke 7: 24-35.* The Master chose the moment of John's fainting fit to pass this high eulogium on the Baptist's stalwart character, his indifference to worldly

bribes and his divine commission. When we write hard things against ourselves, he may be judging us with infinite tenderness and wisdom. Heaven does not estimate us by our passing moods. But the least believer in this Christian age has a clearer knowledge of Christ and a closer relationship to him, than had the Baptist. *He* was a servant; *we* are brothers, sons, heirs, Rom. 8: 16, 17.

If we will not accept the lower call of duty, as was manifested in the appeal of the Baptist, we shall never profit by Christ. Accept the dim light of the morning star and it will lead to the dawn.

It ill becomes us to observe the winds of human caprice. If we please one party, we shall displease the other. There is but one path through life, and that is to do the will of God, in which, as Dante puts it, is our peace. But the children of wisdom recognize her alike in the anxiety of the Baptist and in the graces of the Son of man.

### 25. The Forgiven Sinner's Grateful Love.

*Luke 7: 36-50.* What a trio! *Christ* stands here as a manifestation of the divine love, as it comes among sinners. The love of God is not dependent on our merits; *frankly,* v. 42, is "freely." It is not turned away by our sins: *she is a sinner.* It ever manifests itself as the clearing of debts. But it demands recognition and service: *thou gavest me no kiss.*

*The woman* represents those who penitently and lovingly recognize the divine love. She was not forgiven because of her love; but her love was the sign that she had been forgiven and recognized it. What will not God's love do! The tropical sun produces rare fruit. What Jesus did for her he can do for your many sins. Pardon will lead to much love, and love becomes the gate of knowledge and the source of obedience.

*Simon, the Pharisee,* stands for the unloving and self-righteous, who are ignorant of the love of God. They

may be respectable in life, rigid in morality, unquestioned in orthodoxy, but what are these without love? See 1 Cor. 13. Note the contrasts between *thou* and *she*, *thy* and *her*.

### 26. Various Hearers of the Word of God.

*Luke 8: 1-15.* Hitherto our Lord had made Capernaum his center; now he started on a circuit through the province of Galilee, going through its cities and villages in a systematic and leisurely manner. It must have been a great opportunity for the instruction of the Twelve in his doctrine and methods.

The parable of the sower was suggested by the scenery before the speaker. There is an advance in the stages of reception and growth, indicating the several phases of experience. The success or failure of gospel preaching is determined by the character of the soil. In every crowd there are the hardened, like the trodden path; the impulsive, like the thin layer of earth upon the rock; those with a heart divided by riches or cares, like the thorn encumbered soil; and those who receive with joy and bear fruit with patience. The Lord veiled his meaning in parables. Increased light would only add to the condemnation of disobedient hearers.

### 27. Hearing; Doing; Believing.

*Luke 8: 16-25.* Inconsistency, unkindly words and acts, disobedience to our known duty will prevent our light from shining. If Christ has illumined your wick, see that you trust him to find for you your stand, from which you may emit the clearest rays. You are lighted to shine!

The closest relationship to Jesus is not that of nature but of grace. To listen in your heart to God's voice, to hear it in his Word and in Providence and then to do as it decrees, will bring you into the closest relationship with your Lord.

Be prepared for storms if you link your lives with

Christ. But they cannot hurt you. Men and demons will rage against you; but there is a limit to their power. Jesus rules the waves. "The sea is his and he made it." If only you can include yourself and Christ in that pronoun *we* of v. 24 you can never perish although there be as many demons against you as tiles on the house roofs. So Luther found it. See Isa. 54: 17.

### 28. "Great Things" for One in Great Need.

*Luke 8: 26-39. The victim.* In referring to but one demoniac the evangelist would probably concentrate attention on the more prominent of the two mentioned by Matthew. There must have been some collusion between the elements of the storm and the demons in this man. Everything seemed to oppose the Lord's assertion of his right to be obeyed. If demons could possess a man with such power, what might not Christ do if we yielded ourselves absolutely to him! There must have been some secret yielding on this man's part, or his heart had never become a garrison of demons. He mistook Christ's identity, confusing it with that of the demons. Naked; vile; mighty to destroy! What a terrible combination!

*His masters.* The evil one dreads to be unclothed and would prefer to be in a pig than in the abyss—that word means "without bottom." Once begin to fall, where will it end? The Jews had no right to keep swine, whatever price the Romans were prepared to pay, Lev. 11: 7. Christ left Gadara, but left a preacher there. We are not taken out of the world, but sent to witness to it and against it.

### 29. Tender Ministry to Maid and Woman.

*Luke 8: 40-56.* The story of the poor woman has been characterized as that of "Nobody, Somebody and Everybody." *Nobody,* for she was sick and poor and fearful. *Somebody,* for she was worthy of Christ's notice. He healed her and even stayed his progress to the house of Jairus to elicit her frank confession and

pronounce a further word of peace. *Everybody,* for her story not only helped Jairus, but has been a blessing to mankind; because we also have been the round of physicians but Jesus only has sufficed for our need.

It is a distressing thing to see a child die! Small wonder that Jairus was impatient for Christ's help. The incident of the woman was permitted for his teaching and encouragement. We lose nothing when we await the Lord's leisure. On the contrary, we profit.

Christ needed the companionship of the Apostles because their faith counted. Do not mind small numbers; they are often the condition of Christ's mightiest achievements. He will do what man cannot do, and leave man to do his little part. "Give her to eat."

(*The questions on Sections 1-29, to be found on pp. 165, 166, will serve as a review at this point.*)

### 30. Working through His Followers.

*Luke 9: 1-10.* The Galilæan ministry was coming to a close. The light that had shone there was to move southward and set behind the Cross. Before finally leaving the district our Lord made one last effort on its behalf. Calling together the Apostles he laid his plans before them, divided the district into sections and sent them out in pairs. He gave them no outward investiture, but the inward power of casting out evil spirits. Nothing was to distract them from the great object of heralding the kingdom of God.

Here we seem to encounter the origin of medical missions: their *object* in healing body and mind; their *authority* in the command of our Saviour; their *claims* for support. George Eliot once said wisely: "The tale of divine pity was never yet believed from lips that had not first been moved by human pity."

Notice how Herod's conscience tormented him! He had begun to feel that scourge, which has never failed to find and follow out the murderer, from Cain onward.

### 31. "Give Ye Them to Eat."

*Luke 9:11-17. Chirst feeds the world by his Church.* The disciples passed the bread from his hands to those of the hungry crowds. What an honor that though we are least of saints we should have this opportunity of co-operation! But how often are we prepared for our work by being compelled to study the inadequacy of our resources. The only thing for us to do is to place them at his disposal.

*But the bread of life is sufficient for all mankind.* "They . . . were all filled." There is a universal adaptation between hunger and bread. Other foods are confined to special countries and districts, but bread is for the educated and ignorant, the rich and poor, the old and young. So with Jesus Christ. To every soul on earth his living, dying love makes its appeal, and is enough to satisfy.

*The fragments feed the distributers.* More was left over than had been possessed at first. To impart to others is to gain for oneself. Fling the seed broadcast. With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you!

### 32. The True Use of Life.

*Luke 9:18-27.* Here and also in v. 28 reference is made to the Master's prayers. He was praying alone, before he broke to his friends the death which awaited him and in which we may have some share; he was praying, too, when the cloud of glory overshadowed him. Would it not be well to begin this new day with the resolve to pray more! If the Lord needed it, surely we do, whether for the Cross or the Transfiguration Mount.

Into such prayer, petition and intercession must needs enter. But, ah, what prayer that is, which is neither of these, but the opening of our nature to the inflowing of the divine nature, which is Love, when the soul recognizes its oneness with God and the whole universe!

Our Lord asked these questions that he might lead the Apostles to crystallize their own conceptions in

Peter's magnificent affirmation. But they who will follow his footsteps must expect his lot! First, the Cross is set up in our heart, and day by day our old self-nature is crucified there; then we have to endure for others the Cross of rejection, shame and death. But it is thus that we gain ourselves and come into possession of our own souls. If we dare take this path, neither here nor hereafter will Christ be ashamed of us.

### 33. A Glimpse of Glory.

*Luke 9:28-36.* From some aspects this was the highest point in our Saviour's earthly career. He was the second Adam and had not sinned. There was no reason, therefore, that he should die. He might in a moment have been changed; that which was mortal might have been swallowed up of life. The door through which Moses and Elijah had come stood open, and by it our Lord might have returned. But he could never, under those circumstances, have been the Saviour of mankind. He knew this, so he turned his back on the joy set before him and set his face toward Calvary.

Moses came as representing the Law; and Elijah, the Prophets. Each of these great departments of divine revelation had anticipated his coming, 24:27, 44. As stars fade in the sunrise, so their mission was now merged in him. They spoke of his *decease,* literally, his *exodus,* and it was from this that Peter caught the term which he applied to his own death, 2 Pet. 1:15. The Apostles never forgot this manifestation of the glory of the Lord, 1 John 1:1-4; 2 Pet. 1:17. When you hear that Christ is the Beloved of God, remember Eph. 1:6.

### 34. The Greatest Serve the Neediest.

*Luke 9:37-50.* When the mountain is bathed in the glory of God we are loath to leave it. But we must not tarry in the enjoyment of its raptures, when the plain contains so much misery. Saints and angels on the one hand, demons on the other! The disciples that

have not enjoyed the mountain fellowship have no power over the unclean spirits that haunt men. It is easy to *denounce* demons; we must do more—we must exorcize them.

But let it never be forgotten that if you are able to cope with the devil, in the power of God, you must be prepared for the Cross, v. 44, 45. We cannot die for men, as Jesus did; but we can suffer rebuke and shame with him, and thus "fill up that which is behind" of his afflictions, Col. 1:24.

Let us seek the child-heart! We must distinguish between *childishness* and *childlikeness*. One of the loveliest pictures of the coming time is Isa. 11:6. Only childlike souls can tame and conquer the beasts. Let us welcome simple holy souls, and be ourselves of that class; and let us cultivate large-hearted charity toward those who cast out demons, though they be not of our school.

### 35. The Steadfast Face.

*Luke 9:51-62.* The Master's steadfast face rebukes us! Alas, we so often flinch and cannot appropriate Isa. 50:7. But whether we follow afar off or closely, that lithe, alert, eager figure is always in front and taking the upward path.

We need to remember which kingdom we belong to. We have passed out of the sphere of force and war, into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. It is a reversal of the divine plan of evolution to go back to the fire of vengeance. The only fire that we can invoke is that of the Holy Spirit; and it is remarkable that one of these two brothers lived to call down that very fire on those same villages. See Acts 8:14-25.

The Lord was ever acting as a winnowing fan, detecting the wheat and the chaff in human motive. Be prepared to follow your Lord through loneliness, homelessness, the rupture of tender ties, and the ploughing of a solitary furrow. But keep your eye fixed on the correlatives supplied on the eternal side of your life!

### 36. The Forerunners of the Lord.

*Luke 10: 1-16.* In the appointment of the Seventy there was perhaps an allusion to Num. 11: 24, 25. In this case, as in that, there was the endowment of conspicuous spiritual power. We can only *prepare* the way for our Lord. No one of us can suffice for the soul of man. We must always say with the Baptist: "There cometh one mightier than I." Would that Christ always came where we had been! See v. 1.

Let us not forget to pray for laborers; but if we pray truly we shall endeavor to answer our own prayers, by going and by inciting others to go. How often a child's life becomes dedicated through hands being laid on the young head by some servant of God, who says: "When you grow up, you must work for the Lord Jesus!"

The Lord asks for simplicity. We may not in our northern climate be able to carry out these precepts precisely and literally. But the inner thought of his words is that we are to be absorbed in giving the message, leaving all things else as a very secondary question and allowing God to care for us and ours.

### 37. The Sources of Deepest Joy.

*Luke 10: 17-24.* How triumphant the return of the evangelist! With faces flushed with pride and hearts high with elation, they returned to the Master with their reports. What wisdom it is to talk our work over with Jesus! Even the demons were subject to his Name. He was not surprised. While he had been watching, bearing them up by his intercessions, he had seen an alteration take place in the unseen world. Satan had fallen, as though the work done by these humble men had turned the scale against him. Is it not so still? What we do is of eternal importance.

Then, "in that same hour" it seemed as though the flood-gates of the Saviour's soul were flung open for very joy. He rejoiced that babe-like hearts might know the deep things of God; that all things were opened to

him in his humanity as in the ages before he became man; and that he was permitted to reveal the Father to those who loved and obeyed him. It was for these, and for us, to know things hidden from prophets and kings.

### 38. The Man Who Loved His Neighbor.

*Luke 10:25-37.* This parable was probably suggested by the journey up to Jerusalem. It may be founded on an actual occurrence. Notice how the Master answered the inquiry, *Who is my neighbor?* He said in effect: The question is not, Who will "neighbor" you? but, Whom will you "neighbor"? You ought to ask. Who wants my help? Neighborhood consists, not in what you receive, but in what you give. It is independent of race, creed and the ordinary sentiment of pity. Love overleaps all these distinctions and risks its very life in order to render help. In fact, this parable is a very poem of Love. It is to be compared with 1 Cor. 13.

Notice those two clauses, *He took care of him* and *Take care of him*, vs. 34, 35. It is thus that our Lord deals with us. When we are too far gone to ask for his help, he comes to our side and restores our ebbing life; and he raises up others to do the same. At the best, we are pilgrims and refresh ourselves in inns, but the home awaits us yonder! Begin by loving with your "strength" and you will end with the "heart!"

### 39. Learning the Lord's Secrets.

*Luke 10:38—11:4.* This Bethany idyl follows the story of the Good Samaritan naturally. The village lay at the end of the long pass from Jericho. Love must have its nest and the special objects of its tender care. We cannot live in the inn always; we must come at last to our home, either in this world or the next. He who had welcomed the crowds was now welcomed for his own dear sake. Martha and Mary each gave of her best. Each had her own sphere; one ministered to his physical

need, the other to his heart. The mystical and practical are both required in Christ's service, and blend at his feet. Don't live for many things; but for Him.

The way to teach people to pray is to pray yourself. It was the habitual prayerfulness of Jesus that made the Apostles long to be taught to pray. What an example is here of the power of unconscious influence! If you desire that your children or scholars should pray, pray yourself. The model prayer is full of suggestion as to the order and topics of prayer. Fill in these outlines!

### 40. Encouragement to Persevering Prayer.

*Luke 11:5-13.* The parable of the three friends is very encouraging. We, so to speak, are to act as mediators or intercessors between those who are in sore need and our great Heavenly Friend. They are always coming to us on their journey, and we feel that we have nothing to set before them. Whether their need is for body, mind or spirit, they find us poor and bankrupt. But, at such times, let us turn to God with earnest prayer. If persistence in prayer prevails over the churlish and self-indulgent, what will it not achieve with the One who is "rich unto all that call upon him!" He will give us just as much as we need.

Notice that *how much more!* Count the stars scattered on the vault of night, or the daisies in the fields, or the myriads of living creatures, sustained as the pensioners of his bounty, and ask yourself if he cannot give enough good gifts, and his Spirit withal, to supply all your need. What would you not do for your helpless little child? "How much more . . ." See Phil. 4:19.

### 41. For or Against?

*Luke 11:14-26.* The strong man of this parable is evidently Satan, who guards the palace of man's nature, to which he has no right. It is the palace of the King, which has been captured by his direst foe. The demon-possession of the body is a parable and illustration of the

terrible results of the possession of the soul by the demons of jealousy, passion, etc. Satan is strong—stronger than Adam in his innocence or David in his palace. He is armed with the lie; is always on the watch to lull us into false security; but the peace which he gives is of death.

Thank God, Christ is stronger! In the wilderness and on the Cross he proved himself so. He took away his foe's armor and bruised his head. When Christ takes up his residence in the heart Satan may rage outside and fling in horrid suggestions, but the door is kept closed against his return. They are to be pitied who make a reform in their own strength—Satan will return. Only Christ can work permanent deliverance.

### 42. "The Sign of Jonah."

*Luke 11:27-32.* What a tribute this woman paid our Lord! He was full of grace as well as truth; and those who, with unbiased and unprejudiced minds, saw him moving among men, were constrained to confess his inimitable beauty. Notice that the simplest soul that hears and obeys God's Word is equally beatified with his mother, v. 28.

Men will be judged by the opportunities they have had. Every age and every race and every individual on which the sun has ever shone has had a chance. Not our chance, but a chance suited to the spiritual vision of each, John 1:9; Rom. 1:20; 2:5, etc. So God will be able to judge all men. But in how many cases will they who have not had our advantages be found in a higher class in the great University of Heaven than some of us who have lived amid the light of Christ!

### 43. Dark and Foul Within.

*Luke 11:33-44.* "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord," Prov. 20:27. How many unlit candles there are! Will you not ask whether Christ has ever kindled you with his divine light and life? You have the capacity

for God, but this is not enough: Christ must give you light, Eph. 5:14. Seek the clear shining of the inner light, and remember that it will grow clearer and brighter just in proportion as it is obeyed and followed. What a glorious conception this is, that the Lord Jesus shall so fill us with the radiance and warmth of his love that there shall be no part dark!

Our Lord's denunciations of the religious leaders of his time reveal the wrath of infinite truth and purity against all that is inconsistent with either. Because he loved his sheep, the Good Shepherd must warn them against wolves. Notice v. 41, R.V., which means that our faith, love and joy are to be shared with others. Let us be munificent and generous in self-giving. There is no law of the tithe here! Give *all!*

### 44. Searching Words for Hypocrites.

*Luke 11:45-54.* The minute oral and written rules promulgated by the Hebrew religious leaders overlaid and almost buried under their weight the simple Mosaic code. They were the subject of incessant disputing and discussion. A vast crowd of copyists, lecturers, teachers and casuists were always debating them. The lawyer who here addressed Christ was one of this class. He could hardly believe that this revered rabbi could include him and his fellows in these terrible *woes.*

Our Lord speaks of himself as the Wisdom of God. Compare v. 49 with Matthew 23:34. For a moment he rises above the low levels of his Incarnation and identifies himself with the Eternal God. But what profound sorrow filled his heart, as these stern words were wrung from his lips by the stubborn obduracy of his people! In the Hebrew Scriptures, where the order of the books differs from that of our Old Testament, the death of Abel is related in the first book and that of Zacharias in the last, 2 Chron. 24:20-22. The legend said that the blood of the latter was bubbling up when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem. No sacrifices availed to stop it.

### 45. The Secret of Fearlessness.

*Luke 12:1-12.* The program of this paragraph seems dark. The leaven of evil always at work; the body tortured and killed; confession difficult, denial easy; the trials before synagogues and rulers; the anxiety of witnessing a good confession. The Lord never hesitated in stating the heavy tribulation through which his disciples must come to the Kingdom.

But what infinite compensations! Not forgotten by God; our hairs numbered; confessed before the angels; taught how to speak; all sin forgiven! With such comforts, who of us need fear, except only the power of Satan! What infinite sympathy and care our Father has for us! He knows our sorrows, marks every lurch of the boat, and will supply his gracious comfort and help. Why should we flinch before a world in arms, so long as the Son of man stands for us, as he did for Stephen, at "the right hand of God?" The outward man may decay, but the inward man is renewed day by day.

### 46. The Doom of the Money Lover.

*Luke 12:13-21.* Our Lord did not come into our world as an earthly judge, adjusting differences between man and man. He lays down great principles, obedience to which will bring heaven into human lives. One of the greatest of these is here enunciated in v. 15. Covetousness is as much a temptation of the poor man who is wronged as of his rich oppressor; and love for money will inevitably, in poor and rich, becloud the vision and disturb the inner peace. The worth of a man cannot be computed by the amount that stands to his credit. Not what you have but what you are! *That* is your value in the eyes of God. Some men live to get; see to it that you live to *be*.

It is absurd to suppose that the soul can take its ease, just because its barns are bursting with goods. Goods are not good! The soul cannot live on corn! Merriment cannot come to a heart that is smitten by remorse and

shadowed by the remonstrances of an evil conscience! Besides, we cannot take with us our possessions when we cross the river. We can only take our character—our things pass into other hands.

### 47. The Cure for Anxious Care.

*Luke 12:22-34.* Notice this contrast between two kinds of men: the one cares for himself, is anxious for this life, worries about food and clothes and standing a cubit higher in the estimate of his fellows; the other is content to fill the niche and do the work assigned him by the Father. And he performs his life-task, not for the remuneration it will bring, but for the "well-done" of God—sure that all which is needed, whether for his soul or body, will be provided by him who gave him being. The Father knows thy varied need, trust him!

Do not think of God as grudging! It is your Father's good pleasure to give. Nothing delights him more than to be able to "give good things to them that ask him." For him also "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Remember that the best investments are those we store, not in banks, etc., but in the lives of others: for God himself guarantees the interest.

### 48. Ever on the Watch.

*Luke 12:35-48.* The Lord leads our thoughts on to his advent, when he will call his servants to account. The day may pass into the evening, the evening into the night, and the night may even begin to wear away to the morning, but the faithful servants keep their watch. Their loins are girt to serve, and the house is radiant with their trimmed lights. Presently he comes, and he raises his slaves to sit at his table! They are henceforth his friends—and his highly honored friends—whom he serves with his own hands. The grandeur of the reward seems to have been too much for Peter to grasp, v. 41. Surely it couldn't be for *all.* Yes, said our Lord in

effect, to all who are faithful to their possibilities and use their position and gifts for others.

How abrupt and awful the contrast in vs. 45-48! The greater our responsibility, the greater our condemnation, if we fail. Retribution is the inevitable penalty of infidelity to trust; but it will be precisely proportioned to our knowledge of the Lord's will. There are degrees or grades in retribution as in glory.

### 49. The Great Divider.

*Luke 12:49-59.* As Prometheus, in the old Greek fable, brought fire from above in a reed, so Christ brought the fire of the Holy Spirit in the frail lantern of his humanity. But, first, he had to pass through a baptism of tears and blood. He was under pressure to enter it, because impatient to get through with it. Here was the prelude of Calvary. And what was true of our Lord must be true of his Church. Always the sword, always strife, always division, where the gospel begins to ferment like leaven in human hearts.

The signs of the time pointed to a climax of Hebrew history, for which most of his contemporaries were unprepared. The sands in God's hour-glass were running out. This was the great requirement of the hour—*get right with God.* The warning is applicable to us all, but it was specially spoken of the brief interval which, like the silence that precedes a thunder storm, preceded the fall of Jerusalem.

### 50. Both Repentance and Fruitfulness Required.

*Luke 13:1-9.* Our Lord did not hesitate to hang great lessons on passing events. It is a great art to lead men's thoughts from the outward and transient to the unseen and eternal. God often gives us texts in the happenings of his providence, and when men's hearts are awed and softened there is a conspicuous opportunity for striking home.

We have no right to suppose that sudden disasters

prove the presence of special sin in those who are involved in them. Sin is avenged in this life, but rather in the natural sequences than by some sudden "act of God." Accidents are not necessarily punishments, and we who witness the sad fate of others have no right to congratulate ourselves on our moral or spiritual superiority. Instead of judging others, let us look to ourselves and repent.

The parable of the fig-tree, with its three years of effort to secure fruitfulness, was intended primarily for the Jewish nation favored with our Lord's three years of ministry. But it is of universal application. God is always seeking fruit; love is ever pleading, but sometimes may have to acquiesce in judgment.

### 51. Good Work for the Sabbath.

*Luke 13: 10-17.* There was in this woman a noble principle which led her to persevere in attending God's house, although there was much to discourage her. Probably she was animated by a faith which made her specially susceptible to the healing word of Christ. Infirmity of any kind should drive us to the house of God. We shall meet Jesus there. When he says, *loosed,* all the powers of hell cannot bind us down. "He breaks the power of cancelled sin."

The charge of Sabbath-breaking by these men was very unreasonable, because on that very morning each of them had unloosened his beast to lead him to the well-head. And if it was not wrong, in their judgment, to untie a beast, surely it would not be wrong to untie the knotted disease that bound this woman's head to her feet by an invisible thong! Great human needs must have precedence over the observance of details of ritual.

### 52. The Penalty of Neglected Opportunity.

*Luke 13: 18-30.* Notice here the inward movement and the outward effect of the gospel whether in the heart or in the world of men. The garden and the kitchen,

the lives of men and women, respectively yield the same lesson. Though the seed of the divine nature is sown in secret, it cannot remain secret, but works its way into manifestation. Man's method is from without inward; God's, from within outward. You cannot estimate the results when a little child receives the incorruptible seed, 1 Pet. 1:23.

But the entrance into the full power and blessedness of Christ is by a narrow way. The strait gate is open to all, but it means that we have to deny and leave behind all that is carnal, whether good or bad in the estimate of men, so that the divine life may have the entire field. Merely to eat and drink in Christ's presence betrays a self-indulgence which is foreign to his Spirit. You may sit at the Lord's table and yet be a worker of iniquity! We may be first in privilege, but last in grace. Verses 29 and 30 remind us of Acts 10:34, 35 and Romans 2:13.

### 53. The Lament for Those Who "Would Not."

*Luke 13:31—14:6.* Our Lord was at that time in Peræa, in the jurisdiction of Herod, who probably desired to get rid of him, lest his presence should introduce political complications. Our Lord saw through and exposed his stratagem. How awful to be read by the light of divine purity! He also kept his eye on heaven's dial-plate, and knew that he was immortal till his work was done.

Jerusalem was clearly indicated as the scene of his death; and the city was already so deeply dyed with martyr blood that it would hardly have been congruous for him to suffer anywhere else. Note that pathetic wail of disappointed love. God's brooding love desires to interpose between us and the hovering peril; but we have the awful power to neglect or reject the covering wings of the Shechinah. See Ruth 2:12 and Ps. 91:4.

In 14:1-6 we have a specimen of Christ's table-talk, which he continues through the 24th verse. Though he

knew that he was being watched, nothing could stanch his power and love. If men care for their beasts, how much more will Christ care for men!

### 54. Lessons for Guests and Hosts.

*Luke 14:7-14.* The word *rooms* should be *seats,* R.V. We must, of course, guard against a false humility, which chooses a low seat in the hope of being invited forward. Let us seek it, because we are absolutely careless of prominence except as it gives us wider opportunity. The unconscious humility and meekness of a little child are very dear to Christ. Dwell on your own defects and on the excellencies of others till you realize that you are the least of all saints! Phil. 3:8.

Our Lord's words about invitations to our houses strike at the root of much of the so-called hospitality of modern society. Did not our Lord intend his words to be interpreted literally? They are imperative in their tone. He probably meant what he said. Some of us get so much thanks down here that there will be very little left to come to us at the resurrection of the just, when we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive our rewards, 2 Cor. 5:10.

### 55. The Slighted Invitation.

*Luke 14:15-24.* In this parable the Master anticipated that the Jewish magistrates and leaders would repudiate his invitations, and that they would therefore be extended to the less likely masses to be found in the streets and lanes of the city, and to the Gentiles in the out-lying world. What a prevision is here of the suitableness of the gospel to all the world, and of the ultimate inclusion of all mankind under one roof, John 14:1, 2.

The excuses were obviously trumped up and invalid. Men *see* fields before buying them; *try* oxen before purchase; and can take their wives where they go themselves, if they wish to do so. They who are acute enough for

this world are often slow and careless about the next, though that is the only world which really matters.

If thou art poor, maimed, blind or lame, there is room for thee at God's table; and for thee "a great spoil" shall be divided, Isa. 33: 23.

### 56. The Cost of Discipleship.

*Luke 14: 25-35.* Here we have our Lord's use of the winnowing-fan. Amid the teeming crowds he knew that there were many light and superficial souls who had not realized the cost involved in discipleship. Mark the thrice-repeated words—*cannot be my disciple.*

Our love must be greater than the ties of family affection, v. 26; must be greater than our love for our own way, which must be nailed to the Cross, v. 27; must be greater than our love of possessions and property, v. 33. Christ has done more than any other teacher to cement the relationships of human love, but he always asks that they should be subordinated to the claims of God. Oh, for the love that Paul had! See Phil. 3: 8.

What a comfort it is to realize that God counted the cost before he set about the task of redemption, whether of a world or of us as individuals. He knew all that it would cost, and surely he did not begin what he cannot complete!

### 57. Seeking and Finding the Lost.

*Luke 15: 1-10.* They that have left the fold in which they were nurtured in early life, and have gone over bleak mountains and through tangled brakes, find themselves in this exquisite picture. But the Lord is on their track. He cannot abide happily with the rest, while one sheep is liable to be torn by beasts of prey or caught away by eagles. He goes after it till he finds it. Don't you think, mother, that the Lord loves that child of yours, now far away, as much as you do? Cannot you trust him to seek until he finds? Then he will ask you to rejoice with him. Jesus not only *receiveth* sinners, but *seeketh*

them. Those who have always lived an outwardly correct life and who do not think themselves in need of repentance are the ninety and nine.

Some have the King's stamp on them, but have rolled away into the dark corner amid dust and shavings. Oh, that we were all more willing to go down on our knees to sweep the floor to find the lost! The nine links of a necklace are useless if the tenth is missing. Christ cannot be satisfied until the lost coin is found.

### 58. The Son Who "Came to Himself" and to His Father.

*Luke 15: 11-24.* The pearl of parables! Too often we desire God's gifts apart from himself. *The far country* is not far in actual distance, but in the alienation of the heart. You may be living in a pious home and yet be in *the far country.* Sin is waste. *The far country* is always swept by famine, because our soul was made for God and cannot live on husks. Neither things nor people can really appease our awful hunger if we are away from God.

Sin is temporary madness. The first step to God is to come to ourselves. The prodigal's real nature stood face to face with the ruin and havoc of his sin. Never, for a moment, had the Father ceased to love and yearn. There was an instant response to the slightest indication of repentance. Love was quicker than words, to understand what the prodigal meant. The confession was therefore cut short. Note the profuse welcome, meeting every need—the robe of righteousness, the ring of reconciliation, the kiss of love, the shoes of a holy walk, the feast of fellowship.

### 59. The Son Who Never Came to His Father.

*Luke 15: 25-32.* Notice the difference between the Father's care for his elder son and the son's own estimate of his position, and you will see how easily you may miss

the holy possibilities of your own life, if you allow yourself to be blinded by jealousy!

*Ever with me;* life was meant to be irradiated and blessed by the constant sense of God's nearness. We were meant to live in God and God in us. *All that I have is thine;* such is our wealthy condition, in the purpose of God, that all his divine resources, stored in Jesus, await the appropriation of our faith.

But if we fail to recognize our brother in the penitent *thy son;* if we shut ourselves out of the joy, because of some fancied slight, or of pharisaic pride, we miss our own truest blessedness. But God entreats us to come into it.

(*The questions on Sections 30-59, to be found on pp. 166-168, will serve as a review at this point.*)

### 60. The Right Use of Money.

*Luke 16:1-13.* We are all stewards, but how much we waste! Well might our Master deprive us of our post and trust! The unjust steward used his opportunity of ingratiating himself with the tenants at the landowner's cost. He thus secured for himself a welcome to their homes, when his defalcations came to light and he was dismissed. Our Master did not commend his fraud, but pointed out that the children of this world are singularly alive to their future and prepare for its contingencies. If they make a *wrong* use of money to provide for the future, how much more should Christians make a *right* use of it, so that when they die they may be welcomed to the eternal home by those whom they have benefited!

Money is described as unrighteous Mammon, the name of the heathen god of wealth. It is so often associated with cheating that the adjective is most appropriate. Note also that money is "the least" and "not that which is our own," but God's, to be used by us as *his* servants and at his direction.

### 61. A Look into the Future.

*Luke 16: 14-31.* Here was a flagrant case of heartless indifference, amid luxuries of every kind, to the daily spectacle of abject need. Most of us have at least one Lazarus at the gates of our life. The charge against the rich man was, not that he had injured Lazarus, but that he had *not helped* him. Man condemns us for doing wrong, God for failing to do right.

Lazarus was translated to the realm of blessedness—the bosom of Abraham bespeaking nearness to him at the great feast—not because he had been so poor and miserable, but because, beggar though he was, he possessed the faith of heart and the purity of motive that characterized his great ancestor.

Notice that memory plays a conspicuous part in the sorrow of Gehenna; that Christ gives no hope of changing the soul's habitation; and that we have in the Scripture a more certain agent of spiritual renewal than would be provided by even the apparition of the dead.

### 62. "Take Heed to Yourselves."

*Luke 17: 1-10.* The world is full of stumbling-blocks. Men are perpetually placing them in each other's way; and especially before little children, the simple and the weak. Let us take heed to ourselves and endeavor to make life's pathway easier for others. Let us spend lives of helpfulness and sympathy, full of love and forgiveness, of light and joy.

Do these precepts seem too difficult? Does a sevenfold forgiveness seem impossible? Then learn the lesson of the mustard seed, which opens its tiny door to the inflow of Nature's energy and is therefore enabled to produce what, to its unaided strength, would be impossible. Open your soul to God! His love through you will forgive and save to the uttermost!

But when you have done all, you have nothing to be proud of, and neither God nor man is under any obliga-

tion to you. Love is the elementary duty of the follower of Christ.

### 63. The Man Who Was Grateful.

*Luke 17:11-21.* Their common misery drew these poor outcasts together and made them forget the fierce national antipathies of Jew and Samaritan. When bidden to go to the priest, before there were any outward signs of healing, they started, and thus gave evidence of their faith that they were healed. It was this faith that saved them, because faith like this lets in the whole tide of God's saving health. In the case of the poor alien, it was clear that he was not only healed, but saved, as his gratitude and worship indicated. Do we thank God, not only for his miracles, but for his daily providence?

The best things are stillest. The deepest work of God, in the individual and in the community, does not reveal itself to the newspaper reporter, but steals on the world like Spring through garden and woodland.

### 64. "The Days of the Son of Man."

*Luke 17:22-37.* Clearly enough, our Lord foresaw the approaching dissolution of the Jewish state. There was no help for it, notwithstanding all that the Baptist and Christ himself had done. Suddenly and inevitably its doom must befall, as the deluge in the old world and the overthrow of Sodom. The Roman eagles would gather round the devoted city and only instant flight would avail. The early Christian disciples were warned by these words, and escaped to Pella, before Titus struck the last blow.

Since then other catastrophes have befallen, and finally the day of doom will break upon the world—to all of which the Master's words have been and are appropriate. In one sense, the advent of Christ took place at the fall of Jerusalem, the scenes of which were probably a miniature of the travail through which the new heavens and the new earth will be born. Let us not seek our own,

but the things that belong to the Kingdom; then all other things "will be added," Matt. 6: 33.

### 65. The Lesson for Dark Days.

*Luke 18: 1-8.* There are three phases in our Lord's teaching about prayer—that of Matthew 6, this chapter, and the words of John 14 and 15. In Luke 18: 1-8 he exhorts to uniformity and urgency. There is an aspect of prayer that we are in danger of overlooking when the skies are blue and the sun is shining, and that is, the need of holy violence.

This lesson is taught, in the parable of this paragraph, by a striking contrast which may be stated thus: If an unjust and ungodly judge will finally grant a just petition, out of base and selfish motives and merely to save himself from being worried by a defenceless and oppressed woman, how much more shall the just and merciful God hear the cry and avenge the cause of those whom he loves. If answers to certain prayers, which we have offered in an agony of tears, are slow in coming, we may be sure, either that the time is not ripe, or that he is going to do something better.

### 66. Those Whom God Accepts.

*Luke 18: 9-17.* We are taught here the spirit in which we should pray. Too many pray "with themselves." The only time that we may thank God for not being as others is when we attribute the contrast to his grace, 1 Tim. 1: 12-14. Let it never be forgotten that those who will be justified and stand accepted before God are they who are nothing in their own estimate.

To be self-emptied and poor in spirit is the fundamental and indispensable preparation for receiving the grace of God. "Be propitiated to me" (R.V., margin), cried the publican. "There is a propitiation for our sins," is the answer of Heb. 2: 17, R.V. Each penitent counts himself *the* sinner, 1 Tim. 1: 15. Bow yourself at the feet of Christ and he will lift you to his throne.

"Suffer the Little Children To Come unto Me."
Luke 18: 16, 17.

From Painting by Offrida Kaufmann. Mabel Gifford Allen.

We think that children must grow up to become like us before they are eligible to the Kingdom. Nay, we must grow down to become like them, in simplicity, in humility and in faith.

### 67. The One Thing Needful.

*Luke 18:18-30.* The young ruler was a man of irreproachable character. He might have said of himself all that the Apostle Paul says in Phil. 3:4, etc. But he was restless and unsatisfied. He felt that Jesus had the key to a life deeper than he had experienced, and he longed to possess it. He was so much in earnest that he knelt in the crowded thoroughfare before the despised Nazarene, Mark 10:17.

He did not know himself. He thought he possessed that love which fulfils the Law, Rom. 13:10. Our Lord desired to prove to him that he was deficient in that love, and therefore could not have the eternal life which is love. He did this by suggesting that the young ruler should renounce all and accompany him in a self-giving for others that must end in a cross. But he shrank back. He dared not face a life of simple faith in God for the supply of temporal needs, and of absolute self-giving to a cross. For all who dare this, whatever is right and good is given back to be held and used under God's direction.

### 68. The Reward of Faith.

*Luke 18:31-43.* Our Lord knew what was awaiting him. He laid down his life "of himself." But all the significance of his life and death was concealed from the Apostles and others. Their eyes were blinded, till the glory of the Resurrection morning had dawned and the day of Pentecost had fully come.

Our Lord's mind must have been filled with the anticipation of the momentous issues to be decided; but he was sufficiently at leisure from himself to hear the cry of distress from this blind beggar. How absolutely he

placed himself at the disposal of those who needed his help! Human need and sorrow always commanded him. Each comer was able to draw all the grace he required, according to the measure of the bucket of his faith when let down into that infinite well. There is no reason why each of us should not be made whole and follow Christ, glorifying him. But we are blind!

### 69. The Sinner and His Guest.

*Luke 19:1-10.* For long, we may suppose, the better things had been striving against the worse in this man's character. John the Baptist had wielded great influence over Zaccheus' class and perhaps over himself. Zaccheus was a dissatisfied man. His dishonest acquisitions added to his wealth but subtracted from his peace of mind. He knew that the least he could do would be to repay those whom he had robbed. But his soul required more, and longed for salvation, such as only Jesus Christ could give.

The Lord knew this, and therefore halted beneath the tree and invited himself as a guest to the publican's home. The one man in all Jericho who most needed the Saviour was discovered by him and saved. The grace of God is ever in search of those who have gone as far as their light will carry them.

What a blessing it is that the Lord is willing to be our guest! See that he is welcomed to the guestroom of your heart. Stand to serve him. He brings salvation for you and yours.

### 70. Doing Business for God.

*Luke 19:11-27.* In many respects this parable differs from that of the ten talents. In that, the servants are entrusted with different amounts; in this, the same amount is allotted to each. Obviously, the former deals with our powers and opportunities for service, which greatly differ; whereas the latter deals with those ordinary gifts which are common to all, and especially with the gift of

salvation. All have the opportunity of using and enjoying the same bestowment of life which is in Jesus Christ for those who believe, Jude 3.

Some make the greatest possible use of "our common salvation." They increase its blessings by much prayer and faith and experience. They speak of it to others and spread the knowledge of the heights and depths of God's love. The more they do this, the more it grows on them. Others pass through life without realizing or enjoying Christ's gift of eternal life. They hope that they may be saved; but they have no deep experimental knowledge of his love. These are they who misuse their pound! What a contrast between such and Paul or Luther or Wesley!

### 71. The Welcome of the King.

*Luke 19:28-40.* This humble triumph is a further revelation of our Lord's character. The lowliness of it, which exposed him to the sneers and ridicule of scribe and Pharisee, greatly pleased the simple folk from Galilee, who recognized him as their own, and were proud to identify themselves with him. See Matt. 21:11. It is thus that Jesus pursues his way through the ages; the princes of this world know him not, but his character is appreciated and his claims are recognized by babes, Matt. 11:25; 1 Cor. 2:8. Are you in the Master's procession?

Jesus' royalty is not of this world. It is based on character. It is ignored by the proud, but welcomed by the poor. It is fairest to those whose eyes are anointed to penetrate the veil and discern the eternal realities, and of their enthusiasm, praise to God is the irresistible expression. Note that their song is an echo of Luke 2:14. Oh, to glorify God to the highest degree!

The Lord's need is the master-motive. We can hold nothing back from his request, whether child, or money, or life. Let these words ring in our hearts: *The Lord hath need.*

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### 72. The Doom of the Royal City.

*Luke 19:41-48.* Our Lord loved the city of his race; and when it finally rejected his appeals, he knew that nothing could avert its downfall. Hence his tears! Each nation, city and individual has one day which is the crisis of existence. We cross the equator without knowing it. There is one hour in each God-forsaken life when, as in the Temple before its fall, watchers hear the words, "Let us depart," and there is the rustle of wings! Notice that God visits us in mercy before he comes to us in wrath.

It was a startling act when Christ cleansed the Temple for the second time, John 2:13, etc. If there had been daily papers in those days, they would have chronicled it in great headlines. Extraordinary that this meek and lowly man should break out so vehemently! But his zeal for God's house sustained and bore him along. Let us ask him to cleanse the temple of our heart.

These priests and scribes had vested interests to conserve, which blinded them to the beauty and glory of Christ. If we place a coin, however valueless, against the eye, it will blind us to the sun.

### 73. The Unanswered Question.

*Luke 20:1-8.* When anyone has received a divine commission, he does not need to prove it. His credentials are written large upon his life and message. It was so with John the Baptist. There was no need for him to argue his claims. The crowds in the Jordan valley; the multitudes in the baptismal waters, were sufficient to attest him as God's servant. What he said about God and sin found corroboration in their hearts. So it was with our Lord. The masses of people that followed him and hung on his words had no doubt that he was the heir of the vineyard. The leaders professed to doubt it, because, to use the language of the parable that follows, they were reluctant to surrender their claims to the ownership of the vineyard.

Probably, sufficient stress has not been laid upon the supreme intellectual power of our Lord, which shone out so clearly in these conflicts with Hebrew casuists, and in which he always came off conqueror, by the sheer force of his mind. "We have the mind of Christ!"

### 74. "The Stone Which the Builders Rejected."

*Luke 20:9-18.* The vineyard represents the privileges and blessings of the Hebrew race. The servants are evidently the prophets and others sent from God. Whatever our position in life, God expects a revenue from it. We are not owners, but tenants; not proprietors, but stewards. Are you sure that you are giving God the dues which he may justly claim?

Notice how our Lord severs himself from all human messengers, as the Son. When he said *my beloved Son,* he anticipated John 3:16. The warm kiss of the father's love was on his cheek. He realized that he was the heir, Heb. 1:2; Rom. 8:17.

It is said that in the building of Solomon's Temple, a valuable carved stone was cast aside and neglected, till a part of the structure absolutely called for it. You may build society as you like, but there will come a time when Christ will be needed to give the finishing touch.

### 75. Tribute to Cæsar and to God.

*Luke 20:19-26.* Fearing to touch him themselves, and finding no foothold against him according to the Mosaic law, his enemies sought to bring Christ into collision with the civil power. To do this, no hypocrisy was too mean.

So poor was our Lord that he must needs ask them to furnish the penny or *drachma.* Cæsar has a certain claim on us. He has earned certain rights of homage and tribute by preserving the good order of society and the safety of our persons; but there his authority ends. When he intrudes into the realm of conscience, he is a usurper. In that kingdom he has no claims whatever.

We must give Cæsar his dues. They can be paid in the coin of earth's mintage; but he has no claim on our conscience, faith, love. These bear the mint-mark of God, and to God they must be rendered. Ah, soul! Thou belongest to the great King; thou art stamped with his image and superscription! Give him thyself!

### 76. The God of the Living.

*Luke 20: 27-40.* Here our Lord answers the materialism of his time. He speaks with the note of absolute certainty concerning the unseen, Heb. 11: 27. Its inhabitants do not die or marry, nor are they subject to the conditions of our earthly life. These are *the children of the resurrection.* What an inspiring title! May it be applied to us as in Col. 3: 1-4? Too many are "the sons of this age," Luke 20: 34, R.V., margin! They adopt this transient earth as their foster parent! We cannot belong to both, though some, like Bunyan's waterman, row in one direction, while they look in another.

How wonderful to find a proof of immortality in that passage about the bush, Exod. 3: 6! The fact that Jehovah said, "I *am* the God of Abraham," proved that the patriarch was in existence somewhere at that moment. Those whom we describe as dead are living people who have died. Death is but a passage, a step. There is no break in the chain of existence. Yonder and here all live unto God, Rom. 14: 8.

### 77. David's Lord Testing Men and Women.

*Luke 20: 41—21: 4.* It was the Master's turn to question. As man, he was David's descendant and son; as the Son of God, he was his Lord. Though it sealed his doom, our Lord tore the veil from before these hypocrites, that when he had passed, his followers might be warned against these sunken rocks, Jude 12.

We note the difference between the false teachers, who devoured widows' houses, and the true Leader and Teacher, who set so high a value on a widow's gift. Our

gifts to God should cost us something, else they are not reckoned in the accounts of eternity. The real value of a gift is to be estimated by what is left behind. Remember that the fragrance and beauty of this act have lasted, while the stones of the Temple have crumbled to dust. Holy deeds are imperishable! Jesus is still sitting by the treasury, watching and estimating our gifts.

### 78. Days That Try Men's Souls.

*Luke 21:5-19.* When we ask speculative questions, the Master bids us take heed to *ourselves.* His predictions in this passage were literally fulfilled in the events which culminated in the siege and fall of Jerusalem, forty years afterward. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," and through these throes and agonies mankind steps up to a new level of experience. The devil will not surrender his kingdom, any more than the bodies of men, without a grievous rending first: but there is a mightier than he.

The Church is called to follow her Lord. No easier path than his may she choose. Where there is no outward suffering there may be the inner cross and the death to all that the soul had once prized. Jesus has always stood beside his own wherever they have been called to witness for the truth; and the testimony given by his witnesses has reached the great ones of the earth and reverberated through courts and palaces. In suffering our souls become searched as by fire. We learn to know ourselves and to come into possession of an experience and a self-knowledge with which only suffering could have endowed us.

### 79. The Coming of the Son of Man in Glory.

*Luke 21:20-28.* This paragraph clearly has its first reference to the fall of Jerusalem, which took place A.D. 70. The directions given by our Lord were of the greatest service to the Christian church, the members of which in large numbers, fled to Pella, across the Jordan, and so

escaped the horrors of the siege. But beyond this each great event, such as the dissolution of the Hebrew state, the overthrow of the Roman Empire, the rise of the Reformation, the French Revolution, and so forth, is another stage in the advent of our Lord. He is always "coming in a cloud" so far as the eyes of men are concerned; but with the growing glory of clearer revelation and increased spiritual power. And all these stages are leading up to his final unveiling at his second advent.

That generation did not pass away before these portents were fulfilled; but each great period or chapter of history closes with similar signs. It is as though nature were as sympathetic to the experiences of the race, as the body is to the motions of the soul. Again behold the travail-pangs of creation, through which the new heavens and the new earth are being born. See Rom. 8: 22, etc.

### 80. The Need of Constant Watchfulness.

*Luke 21: 29-38.* The summer of the world is yet before us! *This* is but the springtide, when the seeds are beginning to sprout, but the winds are cold. Ah, halcyon days of unbroken summer glory, make haste to break!

In a limited significance, our Lord's words were fulfilled within forty years of their utterance; but we are still to see how much more is contained in them than has yet been realized. In the meanwhile let us beware of his warning. Note that *cares* endanger our soul's health equally with surfeiting and drunkenness. It is impossible to live as we should apart from constant watching and prayer. The snare is so deftly laid that we may be entangled in it, before we are fully aware. But, oh how great the honor to be one day accounted "to stand before the Son of man!" See 1 Kings 10: 8.

These last hours of our Lord's ministry were very full. The *days* were days of activity, interspersed with snatches of blessed intercourse with the beloved group at Bethany; while the *nights* were spent on Olivet in prayer.

### 81. Selling or Serving the Master.

*Luke 22:1-13.* The world seemed in arms against the greatest Lover of souls that had ever trod earth's soil. *Satan* entered the heart of Judas, for it was his hour, and he gathered all his strength for one last prodigious effort to overthrow the Son of man and thwart his sublime purpose of redemption. *Judas,* one of the inner circle, did not hesitate to choose thirty pieces of silver rather than love, purity, compassion, as they were incarnate in the Son of man. The *religious* leaders of the age also eagerly caught at their chance.

In the meanwhile the Lord girded himself for the conflict by gathering to his heart the remainder of the apostolic band, though none of them really understood. The arrangement of the man with the waterpot was evidently to elude arrest during the supper, as Judas could not inform his accomplices beforehand of the selected supper room. Remember that Jesus asks each of us for the guest chamber of our heart! Ask him, not to be as a wayfaring man who tarries for the night, but to *abide always.*

### 82. The Feast of Love and Its Shadow.

*Luke 22:14-23.* The human soul of Jesus needed this sweet fellowship with loyal friends to nerve it for its sorrows; and he desired to transmit it as a perpetual legacy for his Church in after-days. We may think of that table being elongated till it reaches down the centuries to where we are seated. Look down the long vista and at the end behold the Master himself!

These two allusions to the kingdom of God, vs. 16 and 18, point onward to the marriage supper when the full purpose of redemption will be consummated. As we partake of bread for our natural strength, so spiritual strength to suffer, to resist temptation and to serve is possible only in proportion as we feed on Christ by meditation and appropriation. And let us never forget that the wine is the emblem of his blood, by which the

new covenant was sealed. See Heb. 9:18. When therefore at the sacred feast we place the wine to our lips, we may quote the provisions of that covenant, and hold God pledged to fulfil them. See Heb. 8:8, etc.

### 83. Disciples Who Grieve Their Lord.

*Luke 22:24-34.* It is probable that this dispute about priority took place on their entering the supper room. It could hardly have taken place after the tender scene of John 13. But doubtless the irritated feelings which that contention engendered prepared the way for the testing, sifting and ultimate fall of Peter. It is the little waves that eventually become the mighty billows which wreck the big ships and engulf human lives.

Satan cannot assail us until he has asked and obtained permission, v. 31. God does not tempt, though he permits us to be tempted, as in the case of Job; but with the temptation there is always a way of escape, if we wait on him, 1 Cor. 10:12, 13. How often does our Lord anticipate our trial hours by his prayers, v. 32! We owe it to them, either that we do not fall, or that, having fallen, we turn back. This is the best use we can make even of our failures; they teach us humility, pity, and how to help others. How little do we know ourselves! See vs. 33, 34.

### 84. Drinking the Cup for Others.

*Luke 22:35-46.* Our Lord knew to what he was going. All lay naked and open before his eyes. He laid down his life of himself; but in this supreme act of love he suffered beyond words. It was not that he feared physical pain, but it was the horror of standing before the universe identified with the sin and sorrow of the world, as though these were his own.

In these instructions to his Apostles, as to wallet, purse and sword, we must understand that he meant them to realize that the storm was about to burst upon them with furious intensity.

Some think that our Lord prayed most of all that his body should not give way under his awful anguish. He feared lest he should die before he could reach the Cross! See Heb. 5:7. "Oh, my Lord, thy chosen disciples failed thee in that hour; but so have we! What can we say! Help us to share thy vigil and thy prayer!"

### 85. "The Power of Darkness."

*Luke 22:47-53.* It may have been about midnight when the lights and movement of feet indicated the approach of Judas and his band. The *kiss* of Judas was probably intended to hide his treachery from his fellow-disciples; but it did not deceive his Master, who even in that sad hour sought to touch his heart, v. 48.

When Malchus' ear was almost severed from the body, it was needful that our Lord should interpose, because, if Peter had been arrested, the gaze of mankind would have been diverted from the spectacle of Christ's atonement, and a struggle might have ensued at the gate of the garden which would have justified the worst accusations of the high priest.

The quiet remonstrance with which the Lord met that ruffian band, reminding them of their cowardice in the daylight and amid the crowds, was followed by his submission to be led "as a lamb to the slaughter."

### 86. The Disciple Who Denied His Lord.

*Luke 22:54-62.* Peter loved Christ truly, but miscalculated his strength. Be very careful not to adventure yourself into the midst of temptation. If God leads you thither, that is another matter. We do well to remember Ps. 1:1-3. Let us beware of warming ourselves at the world's fires. It was the firelight falling on his face that revealed Peter, and his brogue that betrayed him.

If, even at that hour, however, he had looked to God, a way of escape would have been found. "He delivereth and rescueth, and worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth," Dan. 6:27. But Peter sought to save him-

self from the results of his folly and sin; only to land deeper and deeper in the morass.

What a look that must have been, v. 61! But, even now, when we sin, Christ looks at us from out of his holy heaven, with such mingled pity and love, that these constitute the worst torment. There is no need of literal fire to make hell. Disappointed love is hotter than "coals of juniper."

### 87. "Rejected of Men."

*Luke 22: 63-71.* This scene of mockery is very terrible. How difficult the twelve legions of angels must have found it to restrain themselves. See Matt. 26: 53. Here we have an exhibition of the hidden evil of the human heart, which is drawn forth in contact with infinite purity, as the stench of stagnant water is elicited by the summer sun.

Our Lord answered not a word to all the false accusations that were leveled against him. He left the false witnesses to refute each other. But as soon as his divine claims were challenged, he could not keep silence. It is very noticeable that, in this Gospel, which lays such stress on Christ's pure humanity, Luke makes it so clear that the unwavering affirmation of his equality with God was the cause of his death, John 5: 18. Is there not a sense in which the eye of faith always beholds him seated at the right hand of God's power?

### 88. Silent under False Accusations.

*Luke 23: 1-12.* The Jewish Sanhedrin, hastily summoned at the hour of dawn, having elicited from Jesus the profession of his messiahship and deity, and having concluded on the death sentence, set themselves to induce Pilate, the Roman governor, to concur in their verdict. In order to do this, they urged that Jesus imperiled the Roman supremacy.

Pilate was accustomed to deal with men, and after careful examination, was satisfied that there was no

ground for the death sentence. *I find no fault.* As God's Paschal Lamb, the Saviour was searched to discover if there were spot, or blemish, or anything that could invalidate his claim to sinlessness. Only the sinless could save sinners. In his heart Pilate knew that our Lord should be acquitted, but his fear of the Jews deflected the verdict of his conscience. By sending the case to Herod, he hoped to get the right thing done, without incurring the odium incident to doing it.

### 89. Barabbas or Christ?

*Luke 23: 13-25.* Herod's moral nature had become almost extinguished by a long course of immorality and cruelty. While the Baptist lived, he had "done many things" and heard John gladly; but when the beheading of this faithful witness on his own orders had taken place, the royal sinner went headlong to ruin. He treated this incident with flippant levity. The gorgeous raiment, being an imitation of the royal apparel of the Jewish kings, may have suggested the inscription affixed to the cross.

By giving the people the alternative of Christ or Barabbas, Pilate expected that they would certainly choose the former. To his dismay, this second effort to salve his conscience without endangering his reputation failed. So he drifted and sold his soul for power. Each of us has to choose between Christ and Barabbas, between the self-surrender of the Cross and brutal selfishness. Barabbas must have stolen to the Cross in the afternoon and said, as he stood there: "He hangs where I should have been. I am saved by his death."

### 90. "They Crucified the Lord of Glory."

*Luke 23: 26-34.* Simon's two sons are believed to have become Christians. See Mark 15: 21, Rom. 16: 13. Perhaps this strange interruption in his ordinary experiences led to the whole household becoming Christian. Jesus and he bore the cross together. So later, Symeon

of Cambridge, who was much reviled for his evangelical principles, loved to think that he and Christ were suffering together.

Ever more thoughtful for others than for himself, the Lord seemed to forget his griefs that he might address warnings and entreaties to these poor women, v. 28. *He* was the young green tree in the forest glade, consumed in the awful heat of divine burnings, while *they* and theirs were the dry wood, which would soon crackle in the overthrow of their city.

On the cross our Lord became immediately the high priest, pleading for the great world and for his own; and he has never ceased since. See Heb. 7:25. Sins of ignorance are placed in a different category from those of presumption; See 1 Tim. 1:13, 1 John 5:16. The answer to that prayer, v. 34, was given on the day of Pentecost.

### 91. Saving Others by Not Saving Himself.

*Luke 23:35-46.* Rulers, soldiers, and malefactors all heaped their insults on the dying Lord, little realizing that they were all included in the great love which was pouring itself out as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. It may be that we shall have to share the same opprobrium, if we drink of his cup and are baptized with his baptism. But God will do for us as he did for Jesus; he will not leave our soul in the grave nor suffer his own to see corruption, Ps. 16:10.

The signs of renewal, wrought in the heart of the penitent thief, showed the sure work of the Holy Spirit. These were the fear of God, the sense of justice in his suffering, the confession of evil deeds, the recognition of our Lord's sinlessness and dignity, and the anticipation of his coming Kingdom. We may begin a day under the dull skies of earth and close it where there is no need of sun or moon. See Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:6. For the rent veil, see Heb. 10:20. Dying saints have often passed home with our Lord's last words on their lips, Ps. 31:5; Acts 7:59.

### 92. Faith from Unexpected Quarters.

*Luke 23:47-56.* God has his agents everywhere. They are not known to us, but are well known to him, and one word from him will bring them and their resources to his help. How many are unsuspected lovers of his Kingdom! Who would have thought that Joseph was waiting for the kingdom of God, or that he would have identified its advent with the death on the cross!

The body of our Lord was well cared for. They who commit themselves to God will find that he will make himself responsible for the body, in life to feed and in death to honor; see Matt. 6:33; Deut. 34:6. The new tomb was so ordered that there could be no possible mistake in identifying the precious body, and that the Resurrection should be beyond question. Love, which clings to the last offices with tender solicitude hastened to express itself with a devotion that braved the hatred of the rulers. Darkness and silence settled on the scene—but this was not the end.

### 93. The Empty Tomb.

*Luke 24:1-12.* The most perplexing question for those who deny Christ's resurrection is, "What became of his body if he did not rise?" If foes stole it, they would have produced it in disproof of the allegations of the Apostles. If friends had taken it, they would certainly have borne it off wrapped in the cerements of death; but these were left behind and wrapped together in such an orderly fashion that evidently there had been neither violence nor haste.

Notice the stress that the angels laid on Christ as the living one. They had doubtless overheard that sentence of his spoken in Galilee and recorded in Luke 9:22. Too many seek the living Christ amid the wrappings of ceremony and creed. He is not there. He has gone forth, and we must follow him where Easter is breaking.

Women were the first evangelist-messengers of the Resurrection. The very ardor of their belief seems to

have prejudiced their message; the Apostles *"dis*-believed," v. 11 (R.V.). But the orderly arrangement of the tomb proved to Peter that clearly it had not been rifled.

### 94. Walking with the Risen Lord.

*Luke 24:13-27.* This exquisite idyl of the Resurrection is too lifelike and natural to have been invented. The sorrowful walk; the reasonings; the wonder that anyone could have been for ever so short a time in Jerusalem without knowing of the events that filled their souls; the lingering hope; the despair that the third day was waning and he had not come; the clue of the morning announcement which had not been followed up; the burning heart—all these touches are full of natural pathos.

How swiftly the seven and a half miles must have sped in such company; and what new light illumined the pages of the Old Testament! All the Bible is full of Him, but we need to be shown its meaning. It is only through suffering that we shall come to the glory. But why should not life be one sweet walk of fellowship with One whom we cannot see, but whose presence fills our hearts with burning love, until suddenly the veil shall part in twain! See 1 Pet. 1:8.

### 95. "Abide with Us."

*Luke 24:28-35.* Our Lord must be invited and constrained. He will not impose himself on an unwilling host; but how glad he is to enter where a welcome awaits! He turns ordinary meals into sacraments; common rooms into royal chambers: and the homeliest things into symbols of the eternal. He sat with them, then vanished; but he was no less truly with them when he ceased to be seen—and all to teach them that when he had passed permanently from their sight he would be nearer than ever.

When you have had a great vision of the Lord, be sure to tell it. Do not wait in the interior of your own

chamber, hugging the joy and comfort of his presence. Hasten back to your fellow-believers. They also have much to tell. This appearance to Simon Peter is referred to by Paul in 1 Cor. 15: 5. When men really love the Saviour, they will love the ordinances of the Church, the fellowship of the brethren, and especially the holy supper, where he makes himself known.

### 96. "Peace Be unto You."

*Luke 24: 36-43.* Jesus himself! We need nothing else when we are terrified and afraid. You may be fearing the consequences of your sin; fearing the approach of your enemy; fearing the future with its unknown contingencies; but Jesus himself is the antidote of fear. He keeps the soul that trusts him within the double doors of peace. See Isa. 26: 3.

This was not an apparition, but the clothing of the spiritual body, which evidently repeats the general outlines of the physical body, though in a rarer and more subtle substance. Does this incident not teach us that when we also are clothed in the spiritual body we shall not be wholly dissimilar from what we are today? We shall be recognizable by our beloved and they by us, 1 Cor. 15: 44.

What was it that made those hands and feet distinctly his own, except that the print of the nails was in them? John 20: 27. "In the midst of the throne . . . a Lamb *as it had been slain,*" Rev. 5: 6.

### 97. "Witnesses of These Things."

*Luke 24: 44-53.* The risen Saviour is the key to Scripture. The pages of Holy Writ need the illumination that falls from his face. Whenever you open the Old Testament, described here under its customary Hebrew threefold division, be sure to ask him to open your understanding also!

Repentance is turning from sin. It is the act of the

will. In remitting sin Christ not only forgives, but stands between the sinner and the consequences.

The "beginning" must be Jerusalem, because the Jew is first in the divine order, Rom. 1:16. But the *end* is the uttermost part of the earth. We are not called to be defenders, but *witnesses* of the truth. We speak what we know and testify what we have seen. Our fellow-witness is the Holy Spirit, Acts 5:32.

Those outspread hands have never been withdrawn. They are still extended over us in benediction, and from heaven itself rain down perennial blessing. Let us rejoice in him with great joy; may each lowly home be a temple full of praise!

(*The questions on Sections 60-97, to be found on pp. 168-170, will serve as a review at this point.*)

# REVIEW QUESTIONS ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

## OUTLINE.

(*a*) What are the main divisions of this Gospel?
(*b*) What important events and parables does it alone record?

## INTRODUCTION.

(*c*) How does this Gospel compare in length with the others?
(*d*) What is known about the author?
(*e*) How is his character shown in his writings?

## SECTIONS 1-29. CHAPTERS 1-8.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

1. To whom is Luke's Gospel dedicated? On what occasion did an angel appear to Zacharias?
2. What promise was made to Zacharias? Why was he afflicted with dumbness?
3. What message did the angel Gabriel bring to Mary?
4. How did Mary give expression to her faith and gratitude?
5. What circumstances attended the birth and naming of the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth? What did the father declare the child's mission to be?
6. What facts relative to Jesus' birth are given by Luke only?
7. What requirements of the Law did Mary have to fulfil for herself and the newborn child?
8. What did Simeon predict concerning Jesus? What prophetess declared a similar message?
9. On what occasion was the boy Jesus separated from Joseph and Mary? What was his answer when he was found?
10. What was the message of John the Baptist?
11. What supernatural events attended the baptism of Jesus?
12. How did Jesus overcome the subtle suggestions of the tempter?

13. What message did Jesus deliver in the synagogue of his home town? How was it received?
14. In what city did Jesus then make his residence? What miracle did Jesus perform there in the home of one of the disciples?
15. What did Jesus seek to teach by the miraculous draught of fishes?
16. What proof did Jesus present that the leper was cleansed? that the paralytic was healed?
17. What did Matthew first do on becoming a disciple of Jesus?
18. How did Jesus and the Pharisees differ with regard to the Sabbath? How is this brought out in the healing of the man with the withered hand?
19. What are the names of the twelve Apostles? What did Jesus teach concerning happiness?
20. What did he teach about our relation to others?
21. What did he declare to be the final test of character?
22. How did the centurion manifest unusual faith?
23. How did Jesus at Nain show his power over death? How did he answer the question sent by John the Baptist in prison?
24. What did Jesus declare to the multitude concerning John?
25. What parable did Jesus relate in the house of Simon the Pharisee? What was its occasion?
26. What were the varied conditions in the field described in the parable of the sower?
27. What did Jesus say about hearing? Why did his mother and brethren wish to see him? What miracle did Jesus perform on the Lake?
28. What results followed the healing of the Gadarene demoniac?
29. Who was healed by touching the hem of Jesus' garment? Whom did Jesus restore to life in the home of Jairus?

SECTIONS 30-59. CHAPTERS 9-15.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

30. What commands did Jesus give the Twelve, on sending them out to preach? What did Herod say of Jesus?

31. What is the spiritual meaning of the feeding of the five thousand?
32. Whom did the people declare Christ to be? What confession did Peter make?
33. What did the voice declare on the Mount of Transfiguration?
34. Who met Jesus and his disciples as they came down from the mountain? What did Jesus teach his disciples about greatness?
35. How did James and John feel toward the Samaritans who rejected Jesus? How did Jesus test those who offered to follow him?
36. What instructions did Jesus give the Seventy?
37. How did Jesus receive the report of the Seventy on their return?
38. What led Jesus to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan?
39. How did Mary and Martha differ in character? What did the disciples petition Jesus to teach them?
40. What may be learned from the parable of the importunate friend?
41. How did Jesus answer the charge that he cast out demons through Beelzebub?
42. Who did Jesus say would condemn the generation that rejected him?
43. What was the attitude of Jesus toward the Pharisees?
44. How did he accuse the lawyers?
45. How did Jesus warn and encourage his disciples in view of approaching dangers?
46. By what parable did Jesus teach the folly and evil of covetousness?
47. How did Jesus show the needlessness of worry and anxiety?
48. What did Jesus teach about his second coming?
49. What did Jesus say about divided homes? About the signs of the times?
50. How did Jesus answer those who told of the Galilæans slain by Pilate? What is the lesson of the parable of the fig-tree?
51. How did Jesus justify his healing on the Sabbath?
52. By what two parables did Jesus illustrate the gradual growth of the Kingdom? What did Jesus teach about the final separation of the righteous and the wicked?

53. What message did Jesus send to Herod? What was Jesus' lament over Jerusalem? Where did Jesus heal a man afflicted with the dropsy? What was the result?
54. What did Jesus say regarding guests and hosts? What is the larger application of this teaching?
55. What excuses were offered by those invited to the Great Supper? How were their places filled?
56. How did Jesus enforce the need of counting the cost of discipleship?
57. To whom did Jesus tell the parable of the lost sheep? What other parable of similar teaching did he tell at the same time?
58. What are the main teachings of the parable of the prodigal son?
59. Whom does the elder son represent?

SECTIONS 60-97. CHAPTERS 16-24.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding numbers in the Comments.*)

60. What is to be learned from the parable of the unjust steward? What did Jesus say about serving two masters?
61. What did Jesus teach about divorce? What is the teaching of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus?
62. What warning did Jesus give about causing offense? What should we say when we have done all that is commanded us?
63. What did Jesus say when one of the ten lepers turned back to give thanks? How did Jesus reply to the Pharisees who asked when the kingdom of God should appear?
64. To what did Jesus compare the coming of the flood and the destruction of Sodom?
65. To what end did Jesus tell the parable of the unjust judge?
66. Why was the prayer of the publican acceptable, rather than that of the Pharisee? What is Jesus' invitation to the children?
67. What did the rich young ruler lack? What did Jesus teach about riches and salvation?
68. What did Jesus announce to the Twelve as they started

to Jerusalem? What miracle of healing did he perform as they neared Jericho?

69. Who received Jesus in Jericho?
70. How does the parable of the pounds differ from that of the talents?
71. How was Jesus received on his arrival at Jerusalem?
72. On what two occasions did Jesus cleanse the Temple?
73. How did Jesus answer the demand of the Pharisees regarding his authority?
74. Whom do the husbandmen in the parable of the vineyard represent?
75. How did Jesus deal with the question of the Roman tax?
76. How did Jesus silence the Sadducees?
77. With what counter-question did Jesus answer the scribes? What did Jesus say of the widow who contributed two mites to the Temple treasury?
78. What assurance of continued aid did Jesus give his disciples?
79. What did Jesus prophesy concerning Jerusalem?
80. What special warning did he give the disciples?
81. How was preparation made for the Last Supper?
82. What startling announcement did Jesus make at the supper?
83. What boast did Peter make and what rebuke did he receive?
84. What prophecy concerning himself did Jesus cite at this time? What caused the sufferings of Jesus in Gethsemane?
85. How was Jesus betrayed?
86. What led Peter to repent of his denial?
87. Where was Jesus first tried?
88. What charges against Jesus did the Jews prefer before Pilate?
89. Whom did the people choose to liberate instead of Jesus?
90. Why was the death of Jesus inflicted by crucifixion?
91. What difference was manifested in the conduct of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus?
92. Who obtained permission from Pilate to bury the body of Jesus?
93. Who first learned of the Resurrection?
94. What conversation did Jesus have with two disciples on the way to Emmaus?

95. How was he revealed to them?
96. How did Jesus reassure the disciples who doubted the reality of his resurrection?
97. What were the final promises and commands of Jesus? How was he parted from the disciples?

# IV
# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

# OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

## JESUS IS THE CHRIST

PROLOGUE .....1: 14.
*The Incarnation of the eternal Word.*

I. THE WITNESS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST .....1: 15-51; 3: 22-36.
*"The voice of one crying in the wilderness"; "Behold the Lamb of God"; James, John, Andrew, Simon, Philip and Nathanael meet Jesus; "He must increase but I must decrease."*

II. THE WITNESS OF JESUS' MINISTRY....2: 1—6: 71.
*First miracle, in Cana; Cleansing of the Temple; Visit of Nicodemus; Talk with woman by Jacob's well and work in Samaria; Nobleman's son healed; Lame man healed by pool of Bethesda; Feeding of the five thousand; Jesus walks on the sea; Discourse on the bread of life.*

III. THE WITNESS OF JESUS' CONFLICT WITH THE JEWISH LEADERS .....7: 1—12: 50.
*Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles; Dispute as to Jesus' origin; Jesus' claims contested by the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am"; Healing of man born blind; The Good Shepherd; Raising of Lazarus; Plot of the Pharisees to put Jesus to death; Jesus anointed in Bethany; Greeks meet Jesus; The voice from heaven; The commandment of the Father.*

IV. THE WITNESS OF JESUS' SUFFERINGS, DEATH AND RESURRECTION.....13: 1—20: 31.
*The Feast of the Passover; Jesus washes the feet of the disciples; A new commandment; Withdrawal of Judas; The Father's house;*

*The Comforter; The true vine; The Spirit of Truth; The high priestly prayer; The betrayal; Trial before Caiaphas, before Pilate; The Crucifixion; Burial; Visit of the women to the tomb; Appearances of the risen Lord; Purpose of the Gospel.*

EPILOGUE ..... 21: 1-25.
*Jesus' manifestation to his disciples by the Sea of Galilee; Draught of fishes; Special commission to Peter; Author's final note.*

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

*This is the "eagle" Gospel. It soars into the empyrean with steady wing and searching gaze. The Church has attributed it with consistent tradition to the hand of the Apostle John. The style and spirit and method of thought are so evidently his. There was, indeed, no one else in the first century who could have written it and remained unknown.*

*Clement of Alexandria says that it was written by the Apostle at the earnest solicitation of his friends; and that he was led by the Spirit of God to compose a spiritual Gospel, which would unfold much that the Synoptic Gospels had omitted.*

*It was probably written during the last decade of the first century, at Ephesus. It is evident that Jerusalem had already fallen, and that Gnostic heresy was already rife; and it fell to the lot of the Apostle to give this last conclusive demonstration that Jesus was the Son of God, John 20:31. It is interesting to study the development of the strife between faith and unbelief, as they became more and more pronounced in respect to the person of our Lord.*

### 1. The Light for the New Year's Path.

*John 1: 1-13.* The titles of our Lord are set forth in royal fashion. As speech reveals the hidden thoughts of men, so does our Lord utter the unseen God. God spake and it was done. His words preceded the act of creation, but Christ was the Word or utterance of God. He who created time preceded time, and that which is before time is eternal and divine. Christ is the organ or medium by which God goes forth in creation, providence, and redemption. The life of God was stored in the human nature of Jesus, when the Word became flesh, that it might more readily pass into us. True life is always light, as the minute *infusoria* of the ocean are phosphorescent. When we receive Christ's life, we shine.

Men are still sent from God, as John was, to bear witness to Jesus; but there is also a witness to him in the breast of man. We call it conscience, or the inner light. The blinded world knew him not. Indeed, John 9 is a parable of mankind's condition, 2 Cor. 4: 4. Believing and receiving are the same thing. Let Christ in, and you have instantly the right to call yourself a child of God, Gal. 3: 26. Only God can impart to us the germ of that life, which we share with the Son himself, Jas. 1:18.

### 2. The Voice of Promise.

*John 1: 14-28.* Note that the Revised Version changes the words *was made* to *became,* v. 14. Evidently Jesus had existed before this becoming; and evidently there was a process of self-limitation. *Dwelt,* that is, tabernacled. As the Shechinah light was veiled by the curtain of the Tabernacle, so the divine essence in Jesus was veiled by his humanity, though it shone out at the Transfiguration. He was full of *grace,* the unmerited love of God; full of *truth,* coming to bear witness to it; full of *glory,* that of the only begotten Son. There are many sons, but only one Son.

What a beautiful testimony John the Baptist gave! He was not the Christ, not Elijah (except in spirit), not the expected prophet, but just a voice, announcing the Christ and dying away. He was content to decrease before the greater whom he had been taught to expect and was sent to herald. There is a sense in which the preacher of repentance must always precede the Christ. There must be a putting away of known sin, previous to the recognition of the Lamb of God. But how great must Christ be, when so noble a man as the Baptist felt unworthy to unloose his sandals!

### 3. Witness Borne to the Son of God.

*John 1:29-34.* John's description of Christ gave answer to Isaac's inquiry, Gen. 22:7. Let us not narrow the extent of the gospel. By the grace of God Jesus tasted death for every man, 1 John 2:2. Though they knew it not, the Messiah had stood on those banks, had mingled with those crowds, had descended into those waters, and was standing among them at that moment. But their eyes were blinded. The new era had already dawned.

The general reader of the story of our Lord's baptism probably supposes that the sign of the descending dove and the sound of the Father's voice were apprehended by all the crowd. This, however, was not the case. John had been previously informed that some day one, indicated by those signs, would come to his baptism. John was the porter of the door of the fold, and it was necessary to certify the true Shepherd when he appeared, John 10:3. To our Lord this was the beginning of his ministry. The heavenly powers were opened to him, which he was in turn to open to all who believe and cooperate with him for the regeneration of the world.

### 4. How Jesus Wins Followers.

*John 1:35-42.* On this third day John again looked eagerly and wistfully on Jesus as he walked. He spoke of him again as God's Lamb, and there was a significance

in his words that was instantly detected by the two disciples—probably John and Andrew—who stood beside him. He intended to transfer their allegiance from himself to the Lord. Henceforth they were to behold *him.* So, at least, they understood it. We are told that they followed Jesus. As the preacher watched their retreating figures and realized that his work was done, he had no feeling of jealousy or regret. He was the bridegroom's friend, and rejoiced greatly to hear his voice, John 3:29. Notice how our Lord develops men. He invites them to his familiar friendship—*Come and see,* and he looks deep down into their hearts, detecting capacities and possibilities that were hidden even from themselves, but which he helps them to realize: *Thou shalt be called Cephas,* a "rock."

### 5. The Doubter Becomes a Disciple.

*John 1:43-51.* The Apostles were attracted to the Master in different ways. Some came to him through preaching, as when John proclaimed his rank and sacrifice. Others were brought through human relationships. The record does not say how many Andrew brought to Jesus, but we are told that he at least brought his own brother. Others were brought by the Master's direct personal influence—*he findeth Philip.* Still others were brought by the call and ties of friendship, following on a long course of previous preparation. Philip had often crossed the hills that separated the Lake from Cana, where Nathanael dwelt, and the two would earnestly discuss the signs of the time: the desperate straits of their country, the preaching of the Baptist, and the Messiah's advent. The guileless Israelite would sit beneath his favorite fig-tree, pondering over the things which Moses and the prophets had written. It was not difficult to win such a man, when Philip broke in on him with the news of their discovery.

Jesus is always showing us *greater things,* v. 50. He leads his disciples onward and upward, for he is himself the ladder of ascent to God.

### 6. Jesus Blesses Social Joys.

*John 2:1-11.* The keyword here is *signs,* v. 11, R.V. translated in the Authorized Version as *miracles.* They are windows into the eternal purpose. The Lord loved to join in simple human joys. "He came eating and drinking." He honored marriage by his first miracle. The wine had to fail, as the earthly and human always must, in order to make room for the eternal and divine. Like Mary, we are impetuous, and would hasten the divine actions: but God is ever deliberate and waits for the exact hour before he interposes. It is hardly likely that our Lord made one hundred and thirty gallons of wine; but that as the servants drew and bore to the table, the wondrous change was wrought. Our Lord did in a moment what he is ever doing, transforming dews and rain into the nutritive and gladdening juices of nature.

Here was indeed a sign that the Master desired to sweeten and enhance human happiness, and that his influence could transform what was ordinary and common into the joyous and sacramental. It was his glory to show that religion is consistent with ordinary life, and to teach that God increases our joys from less to more, and still more. "The best is yet to be."

### 7. Right and Wrong Uses of God's House.

*John 2:12-22.* This market was established in the Temple courts, and many evils were associated with it. The animals were sold at exorbitant prices, which made the dealers only the more covetous. The money-changers made considerable profit in supplying Jewish coins—which alone could be offered in the Temple service—in exchange for Roman and Greek money. Our Lord's presence was august, his soul being aflame with the passion of zeal for his Father's honor. The consciences of those who offended were smitten by the contrast between that holy zeal and their own eagerness to barter.

Our Lord's reference to his body as the true temple

is very impressive and interesting. The Apostle adverts to it in 1 Cor. 6:19. As Jesus cleansed the Temple so he can cleanse our hearts. When he comes to dwell within us, he finds our hearts desecrated by unholy things, which he quickly casts out. He sits as a refiner of silver: his fan is in his hand, and he thoroughly purges his floor. Our Lord's reference to the distruction of his body, by the act of the Jewish leaders, and to his resurrection, proves that from the first he had his sacrifice well before his eyes. In the next chapter this becomes the more apparent.

### 8. New Life from Above the Need of All.

*John 2:23—3:8.* A solemn question is suggested by v. 24. Can Jesus trust himself to us? We must show ourselves worthy of his trust. In chapters 3 and 4 we have two remarkable instances of the Lord's intimate knowledge of the human heart.

Apparently Nicodemus had shrunk from identifying himself with John's baptism. He was one of the richest men in Jerusalem, and our Lord addressed him as *the* teacher, v. 10, R.V. He was willing to talk about systems of truth and schemes of philosophy; but the Master knew that more, much more, was necessary; there must be the emergence of his soul into the experience of an enlarged and fuller life. The phrase, "the new birth," the Jews always used for Gentiles, and it greatly startled Nicodemus to learn that there was needed for himself the same change as was required by Gentiles before entering the Jewish commonwealth. In speaking of water, our Lord probably refers to the baptism of John, in which men confessed their sins and expressed their desire to leave the past behind and to enter a fuller experience of the life of God. The new life begotten by the Spirit of God is as mysterious as the wind. That Spirit, bearing the germ of a new life, rejoices to enter each open casement and to fill each vacuum, wherever one will.

### 9. Love's Great Gift: Received or Rejected.

*John 3:9-21.* Though physically on earth, our Lord was spiritually in touch with the heavenly realities. He was living among them and bore witness to them. Notice that *must,* v. 14. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and the divine purpose of redemption would fail unless he fulfilled his part in the eternal compact. That which had been resolved upon before the foundations of the hills were laid must be carried out in all its terrible detail. He must be accounted as a sin offering, and go forth as a scapegoat. He must tread the winepress alone, and pour out his soul unto death. Yet he was not rebellious, nor did he turn back. He rejoiced to do the Father's will. For the joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross.

Redemption originated in God's great love. Notice the pairs in v. 16: *God* and the *Son; loved* and *gave; the world* and *whosoever; believe* and *have; not perish* but have *life.* The judgment is already in process, and the turning point with each who has known the gospel will be his attitude toward the light he has enjoyed. Evil men avoid the light, as an inflamed eye the sun. No true heart fears Christ, and on coming to him it discovers that unconsciously it has been wrought upon by God.

### 10. John Shows the Greatness of Humility.

*John 3:22-30.* It is expressly stated in John 4:2 that Jesus baptized through his disciples. This controversy arose with a Jew, who was comparing the respective baptisms of John and the Lord. Perhaps he stirred John's followers with jealousy as he contrasted the crowds that gathered round the new teacher with the waning popularity of the old. But the Baptist had no sense of being aggrieved. His answer is one of the noblest ever made by human lips: "My work has been definitely assigned to me. It has been enough for me

to fulfil it. The rapture of the Bridegroom and his success in wooing hearts is not for me. It is enough to behold his joy. *He must increase, and I must decrease,* but I sorrow not. Indeed, my joy is filled to the brim because of his success."

What a blessing it would be if we could enshrine in our hearts this immortal maxim: *A man can receive nothing except it have been given him from heaven!* What we have is God's gift; let us hold it reverently. What another person has is God's gift to him; we have no right to find fault with his dealings with another of his servants. Our orbits are distinct; all we have to do is to shine our brightest where he has placed us, confident that he knows best.

### 11. A Witness to Be Trusted.

*John 3:31-36.* Let us all seek to live more habitually in heaven, that is, in contact with the spiritual world. To do our best work in the world it is not necessary to be great in argument or rhetoric, but simply to bear witness of what we have seen and heard. It is true that the natural man will not receive our testimony. Paul found that out in after years, 1 Cor. 2:14. But where our witness is accepted by the spiritually-minded, another seal is placed upon it as being the truth of God. Notice also that when a man is sent on God's errand and speaks God's word, he can count on the supply of God's spirit without stint. There is no careful measurement of how much or how little. For long years and to any extent, he may count upon God.

Note the present tenses of the last two verses. They are as true today as when first uttered. Our eternity dates not from our dying moment, but from that in which we first trust in Jesus Christ. If you can do nothing else, be willing to trust him as soon as he is revealed to you, and in the meanwhile obey him; that path will bring you into the open.

### 12. Satisfying an Eternal Thirst.

*John 4: 1-14.* Our Lord had no wish to precipitate the conflict with the Pharisee party, until he had finished his ministry to the people. He was the last and greatest of the prophets, as well as the world's Redeemer. He therefore withdrew from the metropolis. Here is another *must,* v. 4. There were three in the previous chapter and there are two in this. It was not necessary for Jesus to go through Samaria except for the purpose of mercy to one soul. Jacob's well is still visible, at the entrance of the green valley up which Sychar lay. *Thus,* that is, as a tired man would sit. It was noon. The time when women usually drew water was in the evening, but there were special reasons why this woman came by herself. The love of God overleaps narrow restrictions of sex, and sect, and nationality. Two conditions, v. 10, precede our reception of God's best gifts: we must know, and we must ask.

The living water is not a stagnant pond or well, but leaps up from a hidden spring. The woman keeps referring to the *well,* Jesus to the *spring* in the well. That alone can satisfy. Not the word, but the spirit in the word. Not the rite, but the grace it symbolizes. Verse 13 might serve as the inscription on all places of worldly amusement. Ponder that word *become,* v. 14. You first drink for your own need, then you help to meet the need of others.

### 13. The True Worship of the Father of All.

*John 4: 15-26.* What a train of memories our Lord's words evoked! A spasm of remorse seized the woman, as she remembered the grave within her heart where her first love lay buried, trampled down by the wild crew of later passion. But why awaken such memories? Why open the cupboard and bid that skeleton step down? It could not be otherwise! Christ was there not to enter into an argument but to awaken the dormant conscience and save. The woman evaded the sword thrust, but

she realized that she was dealing with a master hand in the spiritual realm. Hence her question about worship. This led to one of the greatest sayings ever uttered on earth—that God is Spirit; that he is ever searching for true worshipers; and that he is indifferent to places and nationalities and method, that we cannot worship until we live in the spirit-realm and are willing to conform ourselves absolutely to truth—these thoughts have revolutionized the religious thinking of mankind. They have not yet fulfilled their mission, but they bear witness to the unique supremacy of the Christ.

### 14. The Rewards of Service.

*John 4:27-38.* As soon as Jesus opens the living spring within our hearts, we abandon our water pots. When we are saved, we must hasten with the tidings to those with whom we have sinned. First find Christ for yourself; then say, "Come and see." He who knows us with an unchallengeable knowledge cannot be other than the Christ.

The disciples were naturally astonished when they came upon this interview. They might have asked the woman what she was seeking, and the Master why he was talking to her. But they were silent; the awe of God was upon them. Their natural care for their beloved leader led them to press on him the viands they had purchased, but they were destined to learn that the soul may be nourished in obeying the will of God. The whiteness of the harvest appeared in the crowds that were coming down the valley; but at harvest time we are sometimes apt to forget the sower who passed home without seeing the result of his labor. That is not the divine method. The sower is rewarded for his share, as the reaper for his—they rejoice together.

### 15. The Growth of Faith.

*John 4:39-45.* There are many ways of coming to know Christ. In some cases he comes to us, as to the woman by the well, and reveals himself in a direct and

illuminating manner, so that the soul can never afterward entertain a doubt as to his reality or its own experience. In other cases, the report of some associate or friend is the arresting and converting factor. Many Samaritans believed "because of the word of the woman." There was a light in her eyes, a radiance in her face, a strength and dignity in her bearing that convinced them. There was yet another section of the Samaritans, who watched and listened, as Jesus tarried with them. They heard him for themselves, and were convinced that he was indeed the Saviour, not of the Jews only, but of the whole world.

Our Lord could not remain among this interesting people, for his mission was primarily to his own nation. He therefore proceeded on his way to Galilee, not to Nazareth where he was so well known, but as appears in the following paragraph, to Cana of Galilee, where he was welcomed because of the marked impression that he had already made in the metropolis.

### 16. The Reward of Trusting Jesus' Word.

*John 4:46-54.* The particular interest of this beautiful incident is in v. 50. The father had such faith in our Lord's promise that he started off at once on his homeward journey, needing no further assurance that all was well. It would appear, indeed, that he went to some inn or caravansary on his way back, because there would have been ample time between the seventh hour (one o'clock in the day) and nightfall to get from Cana down to Capernaum. Why should he hasten! The boy was living, doing well, since the Master had said so. He was sure of it and thanked God for it and gladly took the opportunity of a quiet night's rest, to sleep off the effects of long watching, intense anxiety, and the swift journey to Cana. When his servants met him with the news that the boy was healed, he inquired at what hour the change had taken place, merely to corroborate his own conclusions. What a happy family

that was! This nobleman may have been Chuza, Herod's steward, Luke 8: 3, or Manaen, Herod's foster-brother, Acts 13:1. Why should *we* not have the same simple faith in the word of God's promise!

### 17. Weakness Made Strength.

*John 5: 1-9.* An interval of some months lies between the previous chapter and this, in which many of the incidents of our Lord's Galilæan life took place. John does not touch on them, because they had been described in the Synoptic Gospels, and because he wished to concentrate all his force on the great conflict which our Lord waged in Jerusalem, the stronghold of Jewish prejudice. He also chose the incidents which led to our Lord's discourses, and served as the text of his words.

The pool of Bethesda had medicinal properties. It was an intermittent spring. There must have been something in this man who lay at its brink which specially attracted Jesus. He saw that he had faith to be healed, and therefore made a direct challenge to the will of the sufferer. As soon as the appeal was made, he opened his heart to Christ's power. Through his expectant faith new energy poured into his being.

Are *you* a withered soul? Healing and wholeness are in Christ for you. Receive from him the power that waits to flow through your wasted muscles. Believe that it is passing through you, and act accordingly. Spring to your feet, roll up your bed, and carry that which has so long carried you.

### 18. Sabbath Work That Pleases the Father.

*John 5: 10-18.* In the foregoing incident our Lord not only healed the sufferer after thirty-eight years of deferred hope, but did so on the Sabbath, and bade him carry his bed home. This clashed with Pharisaic prescriptions; but the man was of course right to infer that he who would work so great a miracle was greater than

either the Pharisee or mere ritual. The religious leaders of that time, like those of all time, could not tolerate the setting up of an authority superior to their own, by one who was outside their ranks; and they accused Jesus of Sabbath-breaking. His judges, however, were little prepared for his line of defense, which revealed the depths of our Lord's inner consciousness. First, he spoke of God as his own Father, making himself God's equal. See Phil. 2: 6. Second, he said that God was working through his life and had energized him to perform that miracle of healing. It was not his own deed but the Father's in him and through him. If, then, they condemned it, they were in direct collision with the Infinite One, from whom the Sabbath law had originally come.

### 19. The Father Working through the Son.

*John 5: 19-29.* The relationship of our Lord to the Father was such that he felt himself competent to fulfil all the functions of the Divine Being. Is it God's prerogative to raise the dead? It is also Jesus Christ's. *The Son quickeneth whom he will,* v. 21. Is it the divine right to be the judge of man? It is also the Redeemer's right. See v. 22. Is it the peculiar attitude of God to be the fountain of life, so that life, inherent, underived, and perennial, is ever arising in his nature, sustaining here an angel and there a humming-bird? This is also an attribute of our blessed Lord. *So hath he given to the Son to have life in himself,* v. 26. The entire sum of the attributes of Deity are resident in the nature of the Son of man. But though all divine attributes were his, and might have been called into operation, he forebore to use them, that he might learn the life of dependence and faith, the life which was to become ours towards himself. He did nothing apart from the Father, v. 19, etc. No vine ever clung more closely to its trellis, and no child to its mother, than he to the Father. See Gal. 2: 20; Heb. 12: 2.

### 20. Jesus' Works His Sufficient Witness.

*John 5:30-38.* The one desire and purpose of our Lord was to do God's will. We cannot penetrate the mystery of his ineffable being, but clearly, so far as his human nature was concerned, he had a will which could be denied and subordinated to the Father's. See John 5:30; 6:38; Luke 22:42. It meant shame, a breaking heart, a soul exceeding sorrowful, the cry of the forsaken, but he never swerved. He clung to it as to a hand rail down the steep dark staircase that led to Calvary. Let us live according to God's will. It feeds the spirit, 4:34. It clears the judgment, v. 30. It gives rest and tranquility to the heart, Matt. 11:29. It is the key of certain and assured knowledge, John 7:17. It introduces us into a great circle of others, who in the past and present, in heaven and on earth, are living with the same purpose. Our Lord cites as allies John the Baptist, v. 6; the Scriptures, v. 39; and Moses, v. 45. Choose this life policy! There is no other way! Remember that God's will is goodwill, and that his love is endless and changeless.

### 21. Wilful Rejection of Truth Condemned.

*John 5:39-47.* Our Lord was accused by the Jews of Sabbath breaking. There were many grounds on which he might have claimed exoneration, but he forebore to use them. He dwelt on these things very lightly, lest he should direct men's attention to himself, his one aim being to bring glory to his Father. In utter self-oblivion; in distinct refusal to act on his own authority—that is, to come in his own name; with the one desire to reveal the inner source of his life, Jesus said, *I am come in my Father's name,* v. 43. Let us learn not to be too careful of our own reputation, standing, or honor; but to live at first-hand, taking our orders and the power to fulfil them direct from Christ. Too often we consult this man's opinion and that person's whim, and our course becomes tortuous and uncertain. What new in-

terest we should take in the Pentateuch, if we really believed! v. 46.

### 22. The Multitude Satisfied with Food.

*John 6: 1-14.* In this chapter we have a further illustration of John's method in selecting for his purpose the miracles which became the texts of our Lord's discourses. These multitudes had evidently gathered on their way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover; and the imminence of that great festival, when the worshipers not only sacrificed but partook of the slain lamb, gave point to much that our Lord said after this memorable feeding of the multitude.

Christ often tests us to see what we shall say and do in the presence of overwhelming difficulty, but he always knows the way out. We at once begin to calculate our paltry resources, and to confess their inadequacy. We come back to explain that when we have done our utmost, we can provide very little. Then he steps in, determined that everyone shall be *filled,* with an ample supply left over. He makes his guests sit down in comfort on the grass, because there is plenty of time, as well as an abundance of food, for a happy and comfortable meal. *We* must bring him what we have, however slender; must enter into his great plan and arrange the people for the banquet; must distribute the food and gather up the broken pieces. The world is to be fed by the cooperation of Christ and his Church.

### 23. Jesus Brings Peace to Troubled Hearts.

*John 6: 15-21.* The most conclusive proof that our Lord was no weak fanatic or enthusiast is afforded by the calm temper which refused the eager impulse of the crowds to make him king. Here the temptation of the wilderness was repeated; and only one who was filled with the unwavering determination to do God's will, could have refused this short cut to Messianic empire. Notice these withdrawls of our Lord to the calm

of nature's stillness and the bosom of God. If he needed such spaces of undisturbed meditation and communion, surely we do.

He knew when he pressed the disciples into the boat, that the night would be full of storm, but he did not hesitate to expose them to its peril; he was conscious of his ability to turn that storm to the highest use by coming to their help. His advent is often delayed, but he always comes. Delays are not denials. He is as near in the storm as though already in the boat. The storm-waves are his pathway. Be not afraid! The people hurried across the Lake in the early morning, conveyed in the boats which had come to take them off; but as Jesus sorrowfully perceived, their object was to receive his gifts and not himself.

### 24. Insincere Seekers of Truth.

*John 6:22-29.* The mention in v. 23 of Christ's giving thanks, recalls the vivid impression made by that solemn act, and the great importance which those who witnessed it attached to it. When the multitudes, disembarking on the other side of the Lake found Jesus there, though they knew that he had not accompanied his disciples in the one boat that left the farther shore on the previous night, his presence had the effect of an apparition. See v. 25. Our Lord's answer to the question of the crowd deals with the motive that dictated it. He exposed the spurious and carnal impulses that actuated them, and contrasted the satisfaction of natural hunger, v. 26, with that true and effectual seeking which leads to the nourishment of the spirit, v. 27. What a difference between these people, with their gross aspirations and carnal desires, and the spiritual Israel, which could say with the psalmist, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God"! All the labor described in v. 27 is to maintain a pure heart and exercise an appropriating faith. God sealed Christ by his declaration at the water of baptism and the miracles which were wrought through the Father's power, 14:10.

### 25. The Father's Will Jesus' Law of Life.

*John 6:30-40.* On the day following, our Lord had to encounter, first the demand of the people for a continuation of the miracle of the preceding night, vs. 25-40; second, the murmur of "the Jews," that is, their religious leaders, vs. 41-51; third, the growing heat of his opponents, vs. 52-59; and lastly, the failure of many of his disciples, vs. 60-71. But his mountain prayer had prepared him, v. 15.

The manna was only a type of his mission to meet the hunger of the human spirit for truth, and love, and hope. He is the true bread from heaven, God's best gift (of the reality of which all material substances are but emblems), not only satisfying passing hunger but imparting life, and only waiting to be appropriated by any that will. Let us come to him, turning from all else. To come is to cease to hunger, to trust is to lose our thirst. Jesus suffices for heaven; shall he not suffice also for earth? Note the identical clauses of v. 37. All whom the Father gives to Christ come to him; and all who come to him prove that they are included in the Father's gift, bestowed before the worlds were made. See 10:28, 29; 17:6.

### 26. The Food of Eternal Life.

*John 6:41-51.* That phrase, *the last day,* was constantly on the Master's lips, vs. 39, 40, 44, 54; 12:48. It is an indefinite expression for those final scenes in which the history of our race is to be consummated through resurrection and judgment. Jesus lays great emphasis on his resurrection as completing his work for those who come to him. It is not enough to impart eternal life. That would bless the spirit, but leave the body untouched. And he cannot rest until the whole of our complex nature shares in the emancipation and fulness of his salvation. A transfigured manhood and a glorified body must be the crown of his service to his own. By his mighty power, he will raise them up in

the likeness of his glory, that they may share his royal and exalted state. Nothing less will satisfy him, or undo the ruin that sin has introduced. Let us feed on Christ, by meditation on his words, and by communion with himself, of which the sacred Feast of the Lord's Table is a perpetual reminder. Notice that every soul which is taught of God will recognize Christ, v. 45!

### 27. Eat and Live.

*John 6:52-59.* In v. 57 our Lord gives the secret of his inner life. At the beginning of his ministry he told the tempter that man did not live by bread alone, but by God's Word. Here he goes further and says that he lived not only by the words of God, but by God himself. There is also this other truth, that each of us is called to exercise toward Christ the same attitude and dependence that he exercised toward the Father. It is impossible by one illustration to set forth the eternal facts of the spiritual world. Metaphor has to be heaped on metaphor. Already our Lord had dealt with the symbol of manna and bread; he now goes further in order to emphasize the truth that the power to communicate life can only be acquired through death. Our Lord, therefore, describes the bread of the soul-life as his *flesh*, which he would give for the life of the world. Obviously *flesh* is that which has passed through death. But it should always be borne in mind that the Christian soul does not dwell exclusively on the death of Jesus, *but on the life of him who died.* It is the risen and ascended Christ, who died for our sins but whom God exalted to his right hand, that should fill our thoughts.

### 28. The Sifting of Jesus' Followers.

*John 6:60-71.* The teaching of this chapter involves a deliberate act of Christ to arrest the revolutionary movement that was gathering around his person and making him its figure-head, v. 15. He therefore set himself to teach that these people had misconceived the meaning of his ministry, which was not intended to raise

a standard of revolt against Rome, but to lead to a spiritual revolution. The effect of his words was precisely what he expected, and must have shattered any ambitions that had begun to stir in the hearts of his disciples. In v. 41 the men who the night before wished to crown him, murmured at him. In v. 52 they strove among themselves. In v. 60 many of his disciples said that his sayings were hard to be understood, and still harder to be obeyed. In v. 66 many went back. And now as the shades of evening began to fall and the synagogue was almost empty, he was left alone with the little company of twelve, who had sorrowfully watched the overthrow of their hopes. Christ's pathetic question—*Will ye also go away?*—elicited from Peter a reply which proved that the inner meaning of his words had already broken upon their souls. "Thy words give us and nourish within us the eternal life."

(*The questions on Section 1-28, to be found on pp. 232, 233, will serve as a review at this point.*)

### 29. Known by Our Attitude toward Jesus.

*John 7: 1-13.* This feast was celebrated in October. Six entire months had elapsed between this and the preceding chapter. During the Feast of Tabernacles the people dwelt in tents made of boughs, on the roofs of the houses, and in the open places in or around Jerusalem. The rites of the fast recalled the miraculous interpositions of the Exodus. Water was poured forth each morning in the Temple to recall the smiting of the rock. Two candelabra, lighted each evening, represented the luminous cloud which lighted the Israelites by night. The brethren of Jesus are named in Matt. 13: 55, of whom James afterward became chief pastor of the Jerusalem church. They could not deny his miracles; could not understand why he did not lead the popular movement that was ready to follow; and urged that he should at least give the authorities at the capital an opportunity of examining his claims. They felt that

things had reached a point where there ought to be no standing still. Jesus could not explain the reasons that actuated him. He knew that his open challenge to Jerusalem would mean his death; but there was yet further work to be done before his time should come. Let us use our time according to the divine plan.

### 30. How to Know the Truth of Jesus' Word.

*John 7: 14-24.* Jesus now went up to the feast, not because he was prompted by the worldly policy suggested by his brethren, but because he was led by his Father's will. We must be on our guard against unspiritual advisers, and must wait till the hour- and the minute-hands of the clock have reached the precise moment of the Father's appointment.

Here is an easy method of ascertaining whether our Lord's words about God, himself, and the future are merely the words of a human teacher, or are really God's. Be willing to do as he says! Stand prepared to fulfil whatever is revealed to your mind and witnessed to by the inner voice! Live with your face toward the dawn, for though it tarry long it will certainly break. See 3: 21. Faith in the gospel does not come by logic, but as the result of obeying the highest truth that you know. Follow on and your path will lead you out to where Jesus stands, the revealed Son of God and the Saviour of men. The old quarrel as to the miracle wrought at Bethesda on the Sabbath was still alive, vs. 22, 23. His critics did not hold that the Mosaic law was violated if a child's submission to the Jewish initiatory rite was performed on the Sabbath. How foolish, then, to blame Jesus for an act of mercy and healing!

### 31. The Unavoidable Christ.

*John 7: 25-31.* The freedom with which Jesus preached arrested the attention of the people in Jerusalem, and many wondered whether the cessation of hostility indicated a tacit admission on the part of the authorities that Jesus was what he claimed to be. But they were deferred

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in arriving at this final conclusion by the consideration that the origin of the Messiah would be unknown, v. 27. Jesus answered this objection in vs. 28 and 29. He says in effect: "What you say is true: the Messiah's origin is not known: but my origin is unknown, because it is from God, whom you, notwithstanding your profession, do not know. I know him, but to you he is only a venerable Name." The knowledge of the birth at Bethlehem and the lowly family of Jesus, will not explain the mystery of his Person or the secret of his influence on men. All that can only be accounted for by his divine glory as the Only-Begotten of the Father. His hearers immediately recognized the greatness of these claims, which appeared to them blasphemous, though to us they are the literal truth. While the adversaries of Jesus were strengthened in their purpose, his friends were confirmed in their faith. Verse 31 is a decided advance upon v. 12. See 2 Cor. 2: 16.

### 32. A Spring of Life-giving Water.

*John 7: 32-39.* "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The truth of that saying clearly appears in the earlier part of this section. When the Lord spoke of returning to the Father his hearers supposed that he was proposing to visit the Jews of the Dispersion. But how profound are these words of promise to those who come to him! He is not content with speaking of a river. He uses the plural—*rivers* shall flow from him. Add stream to stream, torrent to torrent, river to river, and these will barely suffice to set forth the freshness and abundance of life that shall proceed from the soul that previously had been thirsty for its own personal supply.

When our Lord ascended he received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, and then a new era broke on the world. The life of the believer was no longer only an imitation of obedience. It was the uprising and outpouring of the Holy Spirit from within. We become strengthened with might in the inner man

and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. Thereupon we not only are infilled of the Spirit, but it is *his* gracious ministry to mankind through us that makes the desert rejoice and blossom.

### 33. The Blindness of Prejudice.

*John 7: 40-53.* These short descriptions of the impressions made on his hearers by the discourses of Jesus indicate the double development which was resulting from his ministry. Those in favor spoke of the Prophet and the Christ. Compare John 1: 21; 6: 14. Others raised objections, vs. 41, 42. Others again desired to take action, v. 44.

Though it was a holy day, the Sanhedrin was in session to receive the report of their officers. These, by their candid statement, unconsciously passed a strange criticism on the religious speakers to whom they were wont to listen. Compare v. 48 with v. 50 and chapter 3.

How greatly Nicodemus had grown since his night-visit to Jesus! And he was to advance still further, John 19: 39. The appeal to history was apparently true. Jonah is the only prophet who might have been quoted as an apparent exception, but he may only have been a resident in Galilee when the summons came to him. The reasoning of v. 52, however, was not conclusive. Even if none had arisen, it was the more likely that the Divine Spirit should choose the most humble origin; and the one most in keeping with the peasant-birth of the manger-bed.

### 34. The Accusers Self-condemned.

*John 8: 1-11.* This passage has been the subject of much controversy, but there is no possibility of accounting for it except on the supposition that this incident really took place. It reveals in our Lord's character such tenderness, wisdom, hatred of sin, and insight into the heart of man, that it is impossible to suppose that any evangelist could have invented the story.

*The sinner's way of treating sin* is to regard it as

"a case" for curious speculation, and an opportunity for contrasting with it the immaculate virtue of the accusers. They take prurient pleasure in enumerating the terrible details, but give no sign of pity or shame for the sinner. *The Law's way of treating sin* is to stone. The executioner shows no mercy. The offender falls beneath the Law's curse and penalty. *The Saviour's way of treating sin is to forgive.* In that bowed head and hidden face, v. 10, we learn how much sin costs him. But it is easy to hear his words of forgiveness, and to go forth from his presence with the assurance that "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" but we shall never know how much sin has cost him, whom it crucifies afresh. That silent, averted gaze has made men bow their heads and beat upon their breasts.

### 35. The Twofold Witness.

*John 8:12-20.* On either side of the Temple court stood a huge golden candelabrum. On the first and each succeeding night of the week of the Feast of Tabernacles these were lit, and they poured a brilliant flood of light over the Temple and the city. It was to these that our Lord alluded in v. 12. They were symbolic and intended to recall the pillar of cloud which led the pilgrim march through the desert, and at night disclosed a heart of illuminating fire. Our Lord compared himself to the manna in chapter 6, to the smitten rock in chapter 7, and to the cloud here in chapter 8, v. 12.

What the pillar of cloud and fire was to Israel, Jesus will be to his Church and the individual soul. See Exod. 13:21; Num. 9:15-23. The fire in the cloud was prophetic of his deity enshrined in his humanity. It was this consciousness of the union of the divine and human that enabled our Lord to speak as he did of himself. There was no egotism or self-assumption in his claim. It was the literal truth. He bare record of himself, because he could say nothing less, and knew whence he came and whither he went; and the miracles which

he wrought in union with the Spirit of God ratified his witness.

### 36. The Father Made Known in His Son.

*John 8:21-30.* Our Lord was absorbed in acquiring glory for his Father. He was sent by the Father, lived by the Father, could do nothing of himself, and spoke only as the Father taught him, v. 28. He could dispense with all human help and stand alone, because the Father never left him, v. 29. To honor him, please him, work his works, live in his love, was the passion of his life, vs. 29, 49.

There was a mystery in all this that baffled the men of his age. They were from beneath; they lived for worldly aims, were governed by earthly motives, and sought for the praise of men. His life was spent in fellowship with heaven. But to us there should be no mystery. We, too, should aim to do the will of God as the supreme goal of life. Our aims and ends are too low. The conversion of the unsaved, the upbuilding of the Church, are excellent, but they should be included in the sweep of a wider circle. Aim at the planet and you miss the sun; aim at the sun, and you include the planet. Our one intention should be that God be magnified in our bodies, both in life and death. But for this we must be willing to take up the cross and follow Jesus in his lifting up.

### 37. The Source of True Liberty.

*John 8:31-38.* Sin is not a necessary part of our being. *The servant abideth not in the house for ever.* Your child is an integral part of the household; he has become one with it. However far he travels, he can never break the link of indissoluble connection. But it is different with a servant, especially under the provisions of the Levitical law. In like manner, a man may have served sin, but, though tightly held, it has no necessary rights over him. The trumpet of Jubilee may sound,

and he may go free. It is not freedom to do as we like. Jesus sets us free from the trap and the bird-lime, that is, from the unnatural conditions fastening and confining us from being what God meant us to be. The swallow would not thank you to be freed to live on carrion, but only to mount again into the sunny air.

Jesus frees us by the truth. The slave-girl will no longer serve in the house of her cruel oppressor, when she learns that the act of emancipation has passed and he has no longer any claim upon her. When we understand that we are accepted and triumphant because of our union with Christ, we begin to exercise our privilege and to draw upon the grace which he has made available. Thus we become free.

### 38. The Test of Sonship.

*John 8:39-47.* Godly ancestors and parents will avail nothing, unless we are animated by their spirit and do their works. There were in the old world two families that ran in parallel lines—that of Cain and that of Seth. See Gen. 4 and 5. The Cainites were citizens of this world; the Sethites were pilgrims of the eternal. The one family finally reached such a pitch of wickedness that they were swept away by the flood, while the other furnished the world with an Enoch that walked with God and a Noah who was perfect in his generation.

This distinction has continued down the ages, and is not only accentuated by these words of our Lord but by 1 John 3:12, 15. In Eph. 2:2, those who walk according to the course of this world are practically walking according to the spirit that works disobedience in men's lives. It becomes us, then, to see to it that we are not deceived. We may never have plunged into such depth of sin as overwhelmed the men of that generation; and yet if our hearts are steeped in the love of this world, which is passing away, we betray our affinity to evil and not to good, to the devil and not to God, Eph. 2:2.

CHRIST GIVING SIGHT TO THE BLIND MAN. John 9: 1-7.
From Sculpture by JOHN D. CRITTENDEN. Modern British Artist.

### 39. The Eternal Christ.

*John 8:48-59.* It is absolutely true that the Christian disciple does see death as the king of terrors or as a grim monster. Jesus has robbed death of its sting; he has destroyed him that had the power of death. The moment of death is the moment of birth into a wider and happier existence. We are set free from this body of mortality and become possessed of the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The grave is the vestibule of Paradise. We know that the iron gate opens into the city of God. Absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. The moment of transition is so desirable that it is only comparable to the falling asleep of the tired laborer.

The Father glorified his Son by the attestation given at the Baptism and the Transfiguration, by the Resurrection from the grave, by the Exaltation to his right hand. Yet these are but stages in the glorification of our High Priest. The full outburst of his glory is yet future. We shall behold the glory with which the Father has rewarded his obedience unto death; nay, we are to share it with him. See John 17:22, 24. Notice the I AM of v. 58. Compare Exod. 3:14.

### 40. Jesus Opens Blind Eyes.

*John 9:1-12.* At the close of the previous chapter our Lord bore the contradiction of sinners against himself. The Jews had caught up the stones gathered to repair the Temple, in order to inflict the doom of the blasphemer; but Jesus passed through them unscathed and began to descend the great steps. To *human* gaze there was need for Jesus to hasten from his foes, John 8:59; in *his* thought there was greater need to heal this blind beggar. In the most leisurely manner, therefore, he made clay and wrought this miracle of sight. His heart was at rest in God. No great thing is wrought by those who live in perpetual ferment. Through the quiet heart God works his own works, and there will be time enough

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to get them all done before "the night cometh when no man can work," v. 4.

Our Lord perceived that beneath the unpromising exterior of this man were elements of nobility, which he set himself to elicit. The clay which the man found suddenly applied to his eyes awakened wonder, hope, expectation, and faith. It was a ladder by which he climbed from the pit of despair to the mount of joy. The walk to Siloam was a further venture of faith; but there were other steps to be taken ere he attained to the full stature of his discipleship. Some were forced on him by opposition; to others he was led by Christ himself.

### 41. The Testimony of Personal Experience.

*John 9:13-25.* The jealous Pharisees now set themselves to discredit the miracle and to throw suspicion upon the witness. But their hostility, prompted by jealousy and vindictiveness, forced the healed man to realize the moral majesty of Jesus. His eyes became opened to the true values of things, as well as to the world of nature. In a day he had grown far away from the parents, who were simple people, unaccustomed to the glare of publicity, and very much afraid of these religious magnates.

It is marvelous to note this man proving himself more than a match for his opponents, and answering them with a simplicity and a majesty that confounded them. Matt. 10:19. He needed, however, a touch that no human wisdom could impart, and this was given by Christ, who always seeks those whom man casts out and those who dare to live up to the truth they know. Notice the steps: *he is a prophet; he is not a sinner; he is from God; he worshiped him.* None come in contact with Christ without being blinded or enlightened. Our guilt is proportioned to our refusal of the light.

### 42. Wilful Blindness.

*John 9:26-34.* What a contrast between the opening and the closing of this chapter! The blind sees! The

beggar is enriched! The outcast on the Temple steps is a worshiper in the temple of the spirit! And how vast a contrast to the deterioration at work in the hearts of these professedly religious men! From the mouth of a babe in the divine life God can elicit strength to quell the enemy and the avenger. "O God, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

The man's judges cast in his teeth the life-long deprivation from which he had suffered, as a conclusive evidence of his sins. This was the common Jewish interpretation of such a calamity, v. 2. Our Lord, however, taught that suffering is permitted to befall for wise and good reasons, which are compatible with the character of God, and it provides a platform on which the grace and power of God may manifest themselves, each new phase of evil leading to a fresh manifestation of the power and love of God. How often he seems to say, when we are perplexed with the world's sin and sorrow, "These things are not unto death, but to manifest the works of God"! Look not at the pain, but at its results! See what humility and patience God gives; wait to see the harvest of these sowings!

### 43. "A Stone of Stumbling."

*John 9:35—10:6.* In v. 35 we hear of Jesus finding the outcast, whom the Pharisees had excommunicated; and this story is appropriately followed by a picture of the true Shepherd as contrasted with the false. At night sundry flocks are brought to the Eastern sheepfold and committed to the care of the keeper or porter. In the morning the shepherds knock at the barred door of the enclosure, and the porter opens from within. Each separates his own sheep by calling their names, and when thus summoned the flock follows its shepherd, wherever he may lead.

The sheepfold in this parable holds the Jewish people. The stranger is the religious Teacher who fails to speak in the familiar phrase of Moses and the prophets. The Pharisees and scribes are the thieves and robbers

who have stolen God's glory and made profit of his flock. Note that whenever you are put forth, you will find Christ going before.

God has sent many true shepherds from out his presence chamber, to care not only for individuals or churches but for nations.

### 44. Jesus the Good Shepherd.

*John 10:7-18.* He who came in by the door which John the Baptist opened has become the door. It stands open to all comers—*if any man.* The salvation here mentioned refers to the entire process of soul-health: go *in* for fellowship; go *out* for service.

Wherever destruction is uppermost in speech or act, you may detect the presence of the great enemy of souls. Christ is ever constructive, saving, life-giving. Let us not be content until our life has become *abundant* life. Our life cost the Shepherd's life. He did not hesitate to interpose himself between the sheep and the wolf of hell. There is possible between our Lord and ourselves an intimacy of knowledge which can be compared to nothing less than that which subsists between the Father and himself.

Note how our Lord looked beyond the hurdles of the Jewish fold and thought tenderly of the Gentile sheep that were far away. In the revelation committed to the Apostle Paul he gave vent to his love, and through the succeeding centuries he has ever sought them. There may be many folds, but there can be only one flock. Men die because they cannot help it; Christ was born that he might die; he died because he would.

### 45. Our Assurance of Safe-Keeping.

*John 10:19-30.* Our Lord did not shrink from the avowal of his divine origin and glory, when there was need or when they were challenged. See John 4:26; Matt. 26:64. For the most part, however, he wished men to exercise their own faculties of discernment and

to accept him, not because he told them what he was, but because they were inwardly convinced.

In v. 27 we have three characteristics of his sheep—to hear, to be recognized by him, and to follow; and in v. 28 there are also three privileges which they enjoy—to possess eternal life, never to perish, never to be snatched away by man or devil.

Note the safety of those who really belong to Christ. They are not only in his hand, but in the Father's, because the Father and he are one. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Here is a double protection. They may wander far, lose joy and comfort, fall on dark and stormy times, but he is responsible for them, will seek them out, and bring them home. This also is true—that our relationship with Jesus involves our relationship with the Father. But if any should presume to live carelessly because of this divine grace, it is clear that such a one is not one of Christ's sheep.

### 46. The Works of the Father.

*John 10:31-42.* In the strongest terms known to the Jews, our Lord insisted on his oneness with God; and they understood his claims, threatening him with the penalty of blasphemy. This quotation from Psalm 82:6 was originally addressed to magistrates, and our Lord argued that if unjust judges were described by this phrase, because they exercised the divine prerogative of judgment, surely his opponents had no right to stone him, when, as the Sent of God and sanctioned by God's witness in his works, he spoke of himself as the Father's equal and fellow. See Zech. 13:7; and Phil. 2:6. But their vindictive hate would brook no parley; and as his hour was not yet come, Jesus deemed it better to go beyond Jordan into hiding, until the minute-hand should reach the exact figure on the dial.

There was a special reason why he was attracted to the region beyond Jordan. It was the place of John's early appearance. That ground had been black with crowds, those waters had witnessed countless baptisms.

All that wonderful past trooped back to memory, and the people remembered John's word as they saw in Christ their precise fulfilment. We may work no miracle, but let us speak true words about Jesus Christ.

### 47. Jesus Faces Death for His Friend.

*John 11:1-16.* Sickness enters homes even where God is honored and loved. It is permitted because it affords an opportunity and platform for his delivering help. We should see to it that the Son of God is glorified in our physical weakness, either because of our patience and fortitude, which are ministered by his Spirit, or by the deliverances which he grants. See 2 Cor. 12:1-9.

There is a special emphasis on *therefore* in v. 6. Christ lingered because he loved. He allowed the worse to go to the worst, that the sisters (and the world through them) might receive a testimony to his saving power, which could be obtained at no less cost than their brother's death, v. 9. As long as the heart is bathed in the light of God's presence and is conscious of living on his plan, it cannot be mistaken in its decisions and it will not stumble. Our Lord knew that he must go to Bethany, and that he would be safe, because the hour of night had not arrived.

Since Jesus came to us, death has become a mere shadow of its former self and is to be dreaded no more than sleep. Had the Lord been beside his dying friend, he could not have forborne the entreaty of the sisters, but now there was room for a faith-compelling miracle on his part.

### 48. Jesus the Resurrection and the Life.

*John 11:17-27.* His step may linger, but Jesus comes at length. While he seems to tarry, he knows each sigh, pang, and tear that escapes from the sufferer and his friends; and when he arrives he does more than we asked or thought. He raises not the sick, but the dead. He makes the darkness of the tomb the background to set forth the resurrection glory. He turns tears into

jewels, as the sun does with dewdrops. In after days the three would not have wished it otherwise. They would review it all, as we shall our life from the hilltops of heavenly glory, with the cry of "Amen, Hallelujah." *Amen,* the reverent assent of the will. *Hallelujah,* the glad ascription of praise, v. 25. If we die before his second advent, we shall still live; if we live to see it, we shall be changed in a moment into his likeness.

Note that majestic consciousness of I AM, v. 25. None ever spoke like this. It is the crown of the eight I AMS of this Gospel. He is unchangeably the same. All who have lived are living still in him. When you stand by the grave where your cherished hopes lie buried, still dare to affirm that he is the Christ, the expression of the love of God.

### 49. The Sympathy of Jesus.

*John 11: 28-35.* It is not to be wondered at that the sisters and their friends wept as they stood beside the grave; but why did Jesus weep? He knew what he had come to do. He had come for the express purpose of turning their tears into joy. He wept for human frailty —that man's life is an handbreadth and his years as a tale that is told. He wept in sympathy with human sorrow, because he realized that the scene in which he was taking part was a sample of myriads more. He groaned, as in v. 33, R.V., as he beheld the evidences of death's grim power. Death had entered the world with man's sin, and Jesus felt the wrongfulness of Satan's usurpation. The anarchy that had invaded human life stirred his soul to its lowest depths. The wrong under which man bled wrought in him an anger which was without sin. He still stands among our groups of mourners, touched with the feeling of their sorrow, but they are not tears of weak sentiment, but of a noble pathos that hastens to help with a divine sufficiency. It has also been suggested that Jesus wept because he was calling a soul back from the land of glory to sojourn once more in the garments of mortality.

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### 50. Victory over Death.

*John 11:36-44.* 1. The Lord had been praying about this matter before he came to the grave: *"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me."* Notice that *past* tense. Perhaps he had done so when he first received the news of Lazarus' sickness. He had prayed and had received the assurance that his prayer was answered. When he started back across the Jordan, it was with the full assurance that Lazarus would be raised to life. 2. He was conscious, also, of a life of unceasing prayer. There was unbroken and constant co-operation between him and the Father. He always did the things that pleased God and God was always answering him. This, also, might be our constant experience. 3. Christ made this prayer that those who stood around, as they saw the effect of prayer, should understand that prayer alone can work great miracles, which become the credentials of Christ, and of all who love and obey him. His people similarily can do great miracles, as missionaries, Christian workers, and philanthropists.

### 51. The Innocent for the Guilty.

*John 11:45-57.* The friends of the family who had come to lament with them, were disposed toward Jesus and believed; but the mere spectators hastened with the news, to inflame the hatred of the Pharisees. The Romans dreaded the power acquired by permanent office, and often exchanged one high priest for another. Hence the expression, *being high priest that year.* By his vote Caiaphas may be said to have appointed and sacrificed his victim, who in that memorable year was to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. See Dan. 9:24, 27.

Caiaphas professed to fear that Jesus would presently gain such an ascendency over the people as to lead a revolt against Rome, which would cause a deluge of blood in which the whole nation would perish. Therefore he recommended that they should compass the death

of Jesus. But, as the evangelist puts it, he spoke more widely and truly than he knew, because the death of Jesus is gathering into one the children of God who are scattered abroad—that is, the heathen who were living up to their light, as in John 10:16—that of the twain he might make one new man.

### 52. Love's Fragrant Gift.

*John 12:1-11.* Martha's service reminds us of Luke 10:41. The earlier Gospels (Matt. 26; Mark 14) do not mention Mary's name, probably because the whole family might have suffered for their intimate identification with Jesus; see v. 10. But when this Gospel was written the beloved trio had been gathered home to God.

There was no value in the spikenard except to refresh and comfort, but this was sufficient to warrant Mary's act. We must not always be considering the utilitarian side of service. There are hours of holy ecstasy when we are lifted out of ourselves, in the expression of our love to Jesus, in ways that to cold and calculating onlookers seem mere extravagance. In her absorption in him whom she loved, Mary has incited myriads to similar acts. But her love stirred up the evil in the heart of Judas, as summer's lovely sunshine extracts poison from stagnant ponds. Our Advocate will screen us from our dread accuser. He interpreted Mary's motive. She knew that her Lord would be crucified, and as she thought that there would be no opportunity for love to perform the last offices, she beforehand anointed him for the burial.

### 53. The Tribute of the Multitude.

*John 12:12-19.* This multitude of enthusiastic lovers of Christ were principally from Galilee. They had already reached the city, but hearing of his approach they went forth to meet and accompany him. They were proud to own him as their prophet, and were profoundly touched by the wonderful miracles he had wrought among them. It was a foretaste and glimpse of that

yet gladder outburst when he shall be recognized as the King of men. The lowliness of Jesus' estate should have allayed the suspicion and hatred of his foes. What had they to fear from such a King! But the gladness of his followers maddened his adversaries, who saw with unconcealed vexation the spontaneous loyalty given by the crowds to Jesus, as contrasted with the strained obedience which was yielded to their prescriptions and exactions. Another element in the crowd was contributed by those who had witnessed the raising of Lazarus.

Religious jealousy is deplorable. It leads to murder, if not by the Cross, yet by the lips. It embitters the heart, separates and divides those who ought to love, and hinders the coming of the Kingdom. The cure of hatred and jealousy is the admission of Christ to the heart-citadel as king.

### 54. Sacrifice a Law of Life.

*John 12: 20-29.* These were genuine Greeks. The East came to the manger-bed; the West to the Cross. These men came to Philip, probably because of his Greek name. The inarticulate cry of the human heart, whether East or West, is for Christ.

The application of these representatives of Western civilization reminded our Lord of his glorious enthronement as the Saviour and Lord of mankind; but he realized that the dreams of the prophets could be fulfilled, and the demand of the world met, only through his death and resurrection. There was no other way to the glory than Calvary and the grave. If his love for men was to bear much fruit, he must fall into the ground and die. Death is the only way to Saviourship. Death is the only cure of loneliness, and the necessary price of fruitfulness.

All through life we must be prepared to erect altars on which to sacrifice all that hinders our highest service to our fellows. The soul that dares to live in this way finds streams flowing from every smitten rock, and honey in the carcass of every slain lion. Day out of

night, spring out of winter, flowers out of frost, joy out of sorrow, fruitfulness out of pruning, Olivet out of Gethsemane, life out of death. But through it all, our aim must be that the Father may be glorified.

### 55. Belief May Become Impossible.

*John 12:30-41.* The question of the Greeks led our Lord's thoughts to his death. He saw, too, the baptism of suffering through which his followers must pass. From all this that troubled him, he fled to the Father, asking only that all should converge to his glory. That request was immediately answered in the affirmative. Thus he was led to give this amazing interpretation of the events which were taking place, as viewed from the standpoint of heaven. The age, not he, was being judged. *It* was standing before *him* for its verdict, not he before it. Caiaphas, Pilate, and the rulers of the age were passing before his judgment seat and being judged as worthless. The prince of the age, Satan, not Christ, was being cast out, though the sentence might take long before fully realized. Little as they recognized it, the day of the Cross was the crisis of the history of earth and hell, of men and demons. Then was settled the question of supremacy between darkness and light, between hate and love, between death and life. *Lifted up* recalls 3:14. The Cross is the divine magnet, and our attitude with regard to it shows what we are. Learn from vs. 35, 36 the order of transfiguration into the sonship of light: believe in the light, walk in the light, and you will become sons of light.

### 56. The Commandment of the Father.

*John 12:42-50.* The fear of being cast out of the synagogue was a very real one, John 9:22; and the yoke laid on Israel by the Pharisees was a very crushing one. Only a very few, like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, could withstand it. Let us see to it that we set the promotion of God's glory above any thought of ourselves. We must *confess* Christ, if we would ex-

perience his saving grace. See Rom. 10:10. To reject Jesus was nothing less to Israel than to reject God himself and his word. Such a supreme act of rebellion could not fail to draw down unexampled judgment.

In vs. 48-50 our Lord unfolds to us the significance of his words. They will be the sole criterion at the day of judgment. He will apply to each of us the rule laid down in his teachings, which were purely and simply the reflection of his Father's mind. In every sentence he acted on the Father's mandate; hence his words were capable of quickening and regenerating his hearers. What a marvelous effect would be produced on the world if all ministers of Christ would utter what they had received!

(*The questions on Sections 29-56, to be found on pp. 233, 234, will serve as a review at this point.*)

### 57. Jesus Glorifies Humble Service.

*John 13:1-11.* In the Temple the laver preceded the brazen altar. It was kept filled with pure water for the constant washing of the priests; Exod. 30:18-21; Lev. 16:4. We cannot have fellowship with Christ at Calvary or on Olivet unless we draw near with our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

The Synoptic Gospels tell us that on their way to the feast the disciples had yielded to contention and pride. It was needful that these should be put away, and our Lord's love was equal to the occasion. He loved them to the end of his life and to the end of love. Only such love could have made saints and apostles out of such material.

Jesus *began* a work which has never ceased, and which will continue "till all the ransomed Church of God be saved to sin no more." When we have contracted guilt, we have not to begin our whole life over again, but to go back to the place where we dropped the thread of obedience and begin *there.*

### 58. The Master's Example.

*John 13: 12-20.* Notwithstanding his great humility, Jesus expects to be regarded as Master and Lord; do we so call and treat him? We must be as willing to obey him as a soldier to obey his commanding officers, even when the order conflicts with his comfort, convenience, or safety. We must also do for each other, in our poor measure, what he has done for us, taking on us the form and work of a slave, that we may remove from each other any stain that may have been contracted. It is only when we have stooped to the simplest and lowest humility that we are able to lift our brethren to a purer and nobler life. Let us watch over each other's souls, as those who must give an account.

What sorrow must have constantly weighed on our Saviour's heart in knowing that all his love and care would be resisted by Judas, as the rock in a flower garden refuses to respond to the genial influences of spring! *To lift up the heel,* that is to kick is emblematic of brutal malice. This treachery, foreseen by Christ, was transformed into a support of the disciples' faith. When the incident took place, as predicted, they knew that Jesus was all that he had declared himself to be.

### 59. Kindness to the Traitor.

*John 13: 21-30.* In the circle of the Twelve, Judas represented the carnal idea of the Messiah, which was directly opposed to the spirit just manifested in the washing of their feet. If he would not humble himself and renounce that spirit, Judas must depart; and a great sense of relief must have been experienced by our Lord, and to an extent by them all.

The people of the East lay rather than sat at table, each guest having his left arm on a cushion, so as to support the head, the right being at liberty for eating. Thus the head of each was near the breast of his companion on the left. Such was the place of John with regard to the Master at the Last Supper, and it was easy

to whisper the inquiry of v. 25. In the course of the Paschal meal, the father would offer to the guests pieces of bread dipped in a sauce of fruit, representing the fruits of the Promised Land. It was a sign of special attention, and was one more appeal to the conscience of Judas. He might yet have found pardon. But John saw, as his attention was attracted to him, a change pass over his features, which indicated that the traitor had finally cast the wavering balance on the side of Satan.

### 60. The Sign and Seal of Discipleship.

*John 13: 31-38.* It was a relief when the traitor was gone. The Lord could now speak freely of his love and of his approaching glory, expatiating on the shining tablelands, but not as yet revealing even to Peter the dark ravine which separated him from them, and the shadows which he was already entering. Peter was most anxious to be with Jesus wherever he was. Life without Jesus seemed impossible.

Peter relied upon his strong resolution to keep him faithful to his Master, but found it unavailing, as we have ourselves experienced many a time. Do not vaunt in self-confidence what you will or will not do, but seek strength from the living Lord. How little we know ourselves! Yet the time would come when this ardent spirit would be able to fulfil its vow through the Spirit of Pentecost, John 21: 18; 2 Peter 1: 14.

### 61. Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

*John 14: 1-11.* As he neared the end, our Lord could speak of little else than the Father. Heaven was his Father's house, where a prepared mansion awaits each of us, perfectly adapted to the peculiarities of our temperament. The yearning of the heart of man was truly set forth by Philip in his request to see the Father; but never before had it dawned upon human intelligence that the divine can find its supreme revelation in the simplicities and commonplaces of human existence. While Philip was waiting for the Father to be

shown in lightning and thunder and the splendor of Sinai, he missed the daily unfolding of the life with which he dwelt in daily contact. To see Jesus was to see the Father. Nothing could more certainly prove the need of the Holy Spirit, by whom alone we can know the Lord.

### 62. The Spirit of Truth.

*John 14: 12-24.* There is no adequate translation for the word *Paraclete.* It may be rendered "interpreter," "comforter," "advocate," but no one word suffices. The Greek means "one whom you call to your side in the battle or law-court." His advent depends upon the praying Christ (*I will pray the Father*), and upon the praying Church (*ye shall ask*). The Holy Spirit must be a person, or he could not be compared as "another" to Christ. It is characteristic of this dispensation that he shall be *in* us, and his indwelling brings with it that of the Father and the Son.

"We will . . . make our abode." That word *abode* is the same Greek word as is rendered *mansions* in the former part of this chapter. God prepares a mansion for those who believe in Christ, and asks in return that we shall prepare our hearts as guest chambers for him to dwell in. As he enters the loving, cleansed, and believing heart, we hear him say: "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it," Ps. 132: 14. And what a word is that, *my Father will love him.* That he should love the *world* is wonderful, but that he should love us would be incredible, were he not infinite, and did he not see us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

### 63. Christ's Gift of Peace.

*John 14: 25-31.* Our Lord gives the fourfold basis of his peace: (1) The vision of the Father. Throughout these wonderful chapters he seems able to speak of nothing else. If we lived in the thought and consciousness of God, our peace also would be as a river. Let us wrap that thought around us, as a man his overcoat on a

stormy day. (2) Disentanglement from the world. We must stand clear of the ambitions of the world, of its fear and favor, of its craving for wealth and fear of poverty. The world must have no charms for us. (3) A constraining love, as in v. 31. (4) Obedience to God's supreme authority. When we put the government on his shoulder, he sets up the inward reign as Prince of Peace.

What a contrast to the world's peace, which consists in the absence of untoward circumstances and the possession of material goods! Where the Holy Spirit is, there the peace of God rests. The world may be in arms, death may be imminent, and the prince of this world intent to injure; but the heart which reposes on the will of God is free from alarm and fear. The peace he leaves is that of forgiveness; the peace he bequeaths, that of his own indwelling. "Arise, let us go hence!"

### 64. The Condition of Fruitfulness.

*John 15:1-9.* The vine is not able to do its work in the world without its branches; they stretch far from the root, to bear its strength and sweetness to those who stand outside the wall, Gen. 49:22. We need the Lord Jesus, but he also needs us. Without us he cannot bless men as he would. What a sublime thought is here—that Jesus needs something which I can yield him! Service to God and man is possible only through abiding union in him. Let us yield ourselves to be pruned by the Word, that we may not need the pruning of awful sorrows. It is said that three out of five of the vine-berries are cut off that the remainder may attain their full size. How many of our own promptings have to be excised in order that our best fruit may be yielded!

We cannot be severed from Christ, our covenant head, when once we are truly united to him for salvation; but we may cease to abide in him for the supply of grace and power in ministry. Abide in me, says the vine to the branch. Do not allow the aperture to become

choked, and I will cause the sap to pulsate through thee. Abide in me, says the Lord, and I will be in thee strength in thy weakness, love in thy lovelessness, grace and beauty in thy uncomeliness. "From me is thy fruit found," Hos. 14: 8.

### 65. "I Have Called You Friends."

*John 15: 10-16.* We must estimate the Father's love to Jesus before we can measure his love to us. We are told to love one another with the same love, but enabling power is needed, or we can never fulfil his command. Our love is not like his, unless it is prepared to sacrifice itself even unto death. Not servants, but *friends!* The first stage is that of the bondservant, who does what he is told, not because he understands, but because he has no option. Friendship involves obedience on our part; and on his part the making known of the deep things of God. Even the Son learned obedience by the things which he suffered. It is by implicit obedience alone that we can pass into the closer intimacy of friendship and ultimately of sonship. There is no limit to what the Father will do for those whom his Son calls "friends."

### 66. Suffering for Jesus' Sake.

*John 15: 17-27.* We have been appointed for the one purpose of bearing imperishable fruit, but our holy service to the world will never be appreciated. The world has its own god and religion. It hates without cause. The more Christlike we are, the closer we shall be identified with his sufferings. There is no limit to the hatred and persecution which the world will vent on those who have ceased to belong to it because of their identification with the Crucified. But through the pitiless storm, we must be glad; there must be no slackening of our love, which will as certainly conquer hate as tomorrow's sun the darkness, vs. 26, 27. In each Christian century there has been this double witness of the Spirit in the Church. The voice of the Church has testified to the living Christ, not arguing but attesting;

and to each word of testimony the Holy Spirit has borne assenting witness. Christian apologetics are of less importance than the witness of obscure but Spirit-led lives.

### 67. The Work of the Spirit.

*John 16: 1-11.* We gain by our losses. It was expedient for the disciples that the Lord should go, because the Spirit's presence was contingent upon his absence. The text needed to be completed before the great sermon could be preached. Christ's work must be finished before the Spirit could apply it. Every phase of human experience centers in him whom the Holy Spirit reveals. Whether it be conviction of sin, or faith, or hope, all begin and end with Jesus. The chief sin of the present age is its rejection of Christ, and it is for this that men are condemned. The assertions of Jesus as to himself are vindicated, and his righteousness is established. His divine mission was proved by his resurrection and ascension. The Cross was the scene of Satan's judgment. There the prince of this world was condemned and cast out. His power is broken, though he still does his utmost to intimidate and hinder the followers of Jesus.

The world comes to us first with her fascinations and delights. She comes next with her frowns and tortures. Behind her is her prince. He, however, exists only by sufferance. Meet him as a discredited foe. He has been judged and condemned. For the Church there awaits victory and freedom; for the world, the flesh, and the devil, hopeless defeat—the bottomless pit and the lake of fire. See Jude 7, 8.

### 68. Looking beyond Present Sorrow.

*John 16: 12-24.* The disciples were terribly overwrought by the events of the last few days, the reversal of their cherished hopes, and the growing darkness and sorrow of the approaching cross. Their physical nature and their minds and affections could bear no more. Sor-

row had filled their heart, and the Master forbore to describe in further detail the valley of shadow through which they were still to pass. A comparison of the Gospels and Epistles will indicate how much our Lord left unsaid. All this remained for the Spirit's teaching, to be communicated to the Church through the Apostles. It is thus that Christ deals with us still, apportioning our trials to our strength, our discipline to our spiritual capacity. We long to know God's secret plans for ourselves, and for those whom we love. Where does the path lead which we are treading, and which dips so swiftly and abruptly? How much longer will the fight be maintained between Truth on the scaffold and Wrong on the throne? What is the explanation of the mystery of evil, of the sorrow and agony of the world? And Jesus says: "My child, you cannot bear to know now. Trust me, I will tell you as soon as you are able to understand." The blindness and limitation of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall follow in God's own time. See Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17.

### 69. Good Cheer for Hours of Trial.

*John 16:25-33.* God still speaks to us in proverbs. We could not understand or receive the perfect discovery of himself. These are but part of his ways, Job 26:14. But in a little while, when the entire mystery of his will has been fulfilled, we shall see him face to face, and he will speak to us plainly about the things that we do not now understand.

There is a close connection between prayer and joy. In the midst of a battle, when the soldiers are weary, galled with fire and grimed with smoke, if the general rides into their midst, to cheer them with hearty words and to assure them that the key to the position is already taken, they fight with the inspiration of victory. So down the line our Leader and Commander sends this encouragement. Let us carry his peace in our hearts, and be of good courage, 1 John 5:4, 5.

### 70. Jesus Prays for His Own.

*John 17: 1-10.* In Christ's own oratory we hear him pray. But how wonderful! There is a tone of expectant faith in this marvelous prayer of assured trust, as if he knew that he was asking what was in his Father's heart and thought. The Lord speaks as if he had already passed through death, and were pleading before the throne. He is glad to have authority only that he may use it to give life.

The Father's gift to Jesus consisted in the men who followed him, the word he spoke, the works he did, the name he bore. How careful the Good Shepherd was of those who had been given to him! He prayed for them, he kept them, he entrusted them as his dying legacy to his Father's care. Though he did not pray directly for the world, he was doing his best for it, in concentrating all his solicitude on those who were to be the messengers of his gospel.

In v. 10 we are reminded of Luke 15: 31. The very words which the father said to the elder brother are here appropriated by our Lord; and we are taught that we have the privilege of entering on the same inheritance of grace and power as our Lord had. He won for us, unworthy though we are, the privilege of saying, *All thine are mine.* If only we believed this, and lived as children in our Father's house, how different life would become.

### 71. In the World But Not of the World.

*John 17: 11-17.* What is the *world?* The inspired definition is given in 1 John 2: 16. Enumerating her three offsprings, the Apostle goes on to say, "All that is in the world. . . is not of the Father," that is, does not originate or proceed from him. We might reverse the proposition and say, "All that does not emanate from the Father, and which is inconsistent with perfect love and purity and truth, is of the world."

The spirit of the world permeates society. All its

plans, aims, and activities belong to the present passing show. "Under the sun" is the suggestion of Ecclesiastes. The world has always been in collision with Christ, because his teaching reverses everything that the world prizes. In its beatitudes, its methods of pleasure and acquisition, its view and use of power, and its attitude toward God, the difference is wide as the poles. But its hatred is welcome to the followers of Christ, as proving that they are on the Master's track, and in his fellowship they are abundantly compensated.

### 72. The Master's Commission.

*John 17: 18-26.* In John 10: 36 we are told that the Father consecrated our Redeemer to the great work by which he had brought nigh them that were far off, Eph. 2: 13. What a scene that must have been when Jesus was set apart to destroy the works of the devil, bring in everlasting salvation, and gather into one family the scattered children of God! In that act we were included. We are bound, therefore, to a life of consecration and devotion to the world's redemption.

True unity is spiritual. When we abide in Christ, we abide in each other. Men do not recognize it, but the spiritual unity exists already. If we are one with our Lord, we must be one with all who are members of his mystical body. In different ages the Church has varied outward organization, but there has always been the unity of the one body, the one flock, the one temple. We cannot make that unity, but we must endeavor to keep it, always remembering it, especially when dealing with our fellow-believers. If we are one on earth, we must be with him forever.

### 73. Jesus Accepts His Suffering.

*John 18: 1-11.* Our Lord went forth from the city and across the brook Cedron to Gethsemane, but not for the purpose of concealment, as the second verse clearly shows. How characteristic it was that he should meet the band and ask that he should be taken, while

the disciples should be permitted to escape! Was not this what he was ever doing—meeting peril, temptation, and death, that the great company whom he was bringing to glory might be saved? What meekness and majesty are here! Meekness—that he should subject himself to the binding thong; majesty—that he should be able to use the unspeakable name of God—I AM, for the word *"he"* is not in the Greek.

The *cup* probably referred to the anguish caused to his holy nature in being numbered with the transgressors, and bearing the sin of many. There was much in it from which his spirit recoiled, but he chose to do the will of God, however the flesh might start and shrink. Let us ever take the cups of life's pain and sorrow direct from the hand of God, not seeing Judas, but the Father.

Joseph told his brethren that it was not they who had sent him to Egypt, but God. David would not have Shimei silenced, because he felt that God had allowed him to utter his anathema. Here our Lord reposes absolutely on the Father, who loved him before the world was made.

### 74. Fear Undermines Loyalty.

*John 18:12-18.* Apparently a preliminary and private examination was held while the Sanhedrin was being hastily summoned. The other disciple was evidently John. It was a mistake for Peter to throw himself into such a vortex of trial. His foolhardiness and curiosity led him thither. While the Master was before one bar, Peter stood at another, but how egregiously he failed! In spite of his brave talk, he was swept off his feet—as we shall be, unless we have learned to avail ourselves of that power which is made perfect only in weakness. Peter's fall was due to his self-confidence and lack of prayer. Those who are weak should beware of exposing themselves in places and company where they are liable to fail. Do not warm yourself at the world's fires.

Three lessons emerge from Peter's failure: (1) Let us not sleep through the precious moments which Heaven affords before each hour of trial, but use them for putting on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day. (2) Let us not vaunt our own strength. We need more than resolution to sustain us in the hour of conflict. (3) Let us not cast ourselves down from the mountainside, unless absolutely sure that God bids us to do so. He will not otherwise give his angels charge to keep us.

### 75. Jesus before His Persecutors.

*John 18:19-24.* Annas was the father-in-law of the high priest. For many years he had worn the high priest's robes, and though now he had nominally retired from his office, he still kept his hands on the reins. He was the most powerful factor in the high-priestly circles. He was awaiting the return of the expedition in the hall of his palace, and at once began a preliminary inquiry, in the hope of extracting something on which to base his case against our Lord. Jesus penetrated his crafty purpose, and referred Annas to the army of spies who had been always on his track. There was no anger in Jesus' heart. He desired simply to show how absolutely pure and true his words had been; that though he was exposed to searching scrutiny, yet this secret measure had to be resorted to by Annas to incriminate him. Jesus did not resist evil, but endeavored to bring his accusers and judges calmly to face their own consciences.

### 76. Pilate's Weak Evasion.

*John 18:25-32.* It may be that while Peter was thus denying his Lord, Jesus was passing from Annas to Caiaphas, and in doing so cast on the stumbling disciple that look of mingled sorrow and love which broke his heart. John does not dwell on the trial before Caiaphas, because the other evangelists have already described it; but passes on to tell more minutely of the vacillation and weakness of Pilate. The Roman governor first

sought to rid himself of the responsibility of deciding the case. He refused to consider that it came within his jurisdiction, because it seemed connected with some religious dispute involving a technical knowledge which he did not possess. He suggested, therefore, that the Jewish leaders should deal with it under their own statutes. There was no apparent need for Roman law to interfere. When, however, the murderous intent of the high priests emerged, it became evident that their charges against Jesus were of a much more serious character, and Pilate was compelled to give his earnest attention to them. How little he realized the momentous issues to be decided that day!

### 77. The King of Truth.

*John 18:33-40.* There was a tone of satire in Pilate's question: "Thou poor, worn, tear-stained outcast, forsaken by every friend in this hour of need—*art thou a king?*" Human ears have never heard more majestic words than our Lord's reply. But when he said, *My kingdom is not of this world,* he did not mean that it had nothing to do with this world, but that it did not originate here. It has descended from heaven, and seeks to bring the inspiration, principles, and methods of heaven into all the provinces of human activity. The one conspicuous proof of its absolutely foreign origin is its refusal to employ force. We do not fight, but sacrifice and suffer, for its maintenance. Our Lord therefore hastened to show that his Kingdom is based on the manifestation of the truth. There is no soul of man which is pure and true that does not recognize Christ's royalty, as King of Truth, when it hears him speak.

### 78. Jesus Endures Contempt.

*John 19:1-9.* Pilate was convinced of our Lord's innocence, and he adopted several expedients to save his life; he did everything, indeed, except to act with absolute justice and discharge the case. If he had promptly and firmly refused to be a party to the un-

righteous act to which the Jewish leaders were goading him, before they could further inflame the popular sentiment, the whole matter would have come to an end. But he let the golden moment slip, and every succeeding hour made it more impossible to retrieve it. The proposal to chastise Jesus; the endeavor to induce the people to ask for him rather than Barabbas; the scourging as an appeal to their pity—all such expedients failed to turn them from their purpose. The governor became more and more afraid. *Whence art thou?* Of human birth or more? Our Lord's silence was his answer. Had he been only of earth, he would never have let Pilate suppose that he might be of heaven.

### 79. The Rejection of the King.

*John 19: 10-17.* Pilate's pride was touched by that silence. In his reply our Lord refers to the relative responsibility of those who shared in his condemnation. It was as if he said, "Great as your sin is, in forfeiting your position, it is less than the sin of those who have put me into your power." Pilate then became aware of the coil of evil in which he was caught. He was dealing with a matter that touched the unseen and eternal, but the threat to report him to Cæsar suddenly brought him back to the earthly and human aspects of the case. With ill-concealed irritation he adopted the phraseology of the priests and cried, *Behold your King!* The Jews touched the lowest depth of degradation when, trampling under foot their national pride, they cried, *We have no king but Caesar!* Pilate signed the necessary documents and retired to his palace as having been himself sentenced.

### 80. "They Crucified Him."

*John 19: 18-24.* Just outside the city gates, beside the main road, was a little conical eminence, which from its resemblance to a skull was called in Aramaic, *Golgotha,* and in Latin, *Calvary.* As we speak of the *brow* of a hill, they called the bald eminence a *skull.*

The three languages in which the inscription was written stand for religion, government, and science. Note that every one of us is unconsciously writing his verdict about Jesus Christ; and when once it is written, there is no altering it. We may be forgiven, but the past cannot be obliterated.

The clothes of the crucified were the perquisite of the soldiers. But Christ's were so poor that they were not worth keeping entire, except the inner tunic, the gift of someone's—it may well have been his mother's—love. What a contrast! Above, the consummate evidence of love working out the plan of eternity; below, the appeal of ignorance and brutality to chance.

### 81. Jesus' Last Thought for Others.

*John 19: 25-30.* Love made Mary brave to encounter the tragedy of that scene. The sword, as Simeon had foretold, was piercing her soul, Luke 2: 35. Jesus knew how lonely she would be. He had neither silver nor gold, but could at least secure her a home and tender care. As the cross was elevated but slightly from the ground, his words could easily reach the little group. He chose the title, *Woman,* rather than "Mother," lest identification with himself should bring her insult.

It is to this paragraph that the soul turns when oppressed with the consciousness of guilt. The light-hearted, gay world, which has never known the terror of a sinful conscience, turns from it as from a tragedy of woe and blood, but the repentant sinner presses from this vintage the wine of life. We stand beside thy Cross, O Son of God, and worship in adoring love, as we behold thy tenderness to thy mother, thy devotion to Holy Scripture, and the majesty of thy last cry of victory. *It is finished*—the Saviour's work of redemption and the ground of our salvation. What is there left for us, but to hide in the cleft of his pierced side, and to seek the cleansing of the water and the blood?

### 82. The Piercèd Side.

*John 19: 31-37.* How punctilious the Jewish leaders were to maintain each detail of their ritual! Remember that there is a religiousness which is not religion but its counterfeit.

John solemnly attests the fact of the blood and water. *He knoweth that he saith true.* It is referred to again in his Epistle, 1 John 5: 6, 8. Science tells us that the presence of those two elements was evidence that there had been heart rupture, and that our Lord literally died of a broken heart. But it was also, as devout souls have loved to remember, a symbol of the "double cure," which Jesus has effected. Blood to atone; water to purify and cleanse. What a comfort it is that Jesus did not come by water alone! As we come to know ourselves better, we realize that only blood could meet our need. He bowed his head, that we might lift ours up to greet the eternal morning.

### 83. Love-impelled Services.

*John 19: 38-42.* In that supreme hour Christ's secret disciples revealed their true heroism, and carried him to the garden sepulcher. It had been written that the Messiah would make his grave with the rich, Isa. 53: 9; that prophecy seemed unlikely of fulfilment until Joseph and Nicodemus stood forth, in the darkest hour, as confessors of their faith and reverence. There are more friends of Christ in the world than we know of. They sit in our legislatures, our councils, and we meet them day by day as we go about our work. Although they give no outward sign of love or loyalty, they are forming secret resolves in their hearts, and the time will come when the fires of their love will burn the bushel that hides it, and they will avow themselves on the Lord's side. Let us plead with such, however, not to waste these precious years. How much Joseph and Nicodemus missed of Christ's inner fellowship by this long delay!

It was a royal burial. Love carried the body; sweet

spices scented the air; a new-hewn grave received the precious treasure; and angels mounted guard. Remember that wherever the Cross of Jesus is erected, whether in the soul for the daily crucifixion of the flesh, or in the life by self-sacrifice for others, gardens will inevitably bloom.

### 84. The Witness of the Empty Tomb.

*John 20: 1-10.* In considering John's account of the Resurrection, we should remember that it is largely supplementary to the other narratives. This Gospel having been written long after those were in circulation, the selection of incidents which are recorded is made for spiritual purposes. John's object was to show various instances of faith in the risen Christ, each one being typical and having its own lessons to teach.

Easter morning! What dismay there is in Mary's voice and what consternation in her face! What a mistake also she made, for who can take our Lord away from hearts where he is enshrined! The Greek word used to describe the disposition of the clothes is very remarkable. It conveys the idea that they had fallen together, as if that which they had covered had been suddenly withdrawn.

How much those two disciples missed! Had they only waited, they might have seen the Lord. Do not hurry with wanton haste from the mysteries of our Lord's grave; but learn that on the one hand he was declared to be God's Son, Rom. 1: 4, and on the other we are taught the victory of faith even over death, John 11: 26.

### 85. The Joy of the Resurrection.

*John 20: 11-18.* Mary wept with hopeless sorrow, with no thought that Jesus was risen, and anxious only to secure the body of her dear Master and Friend. It is because we know so little of the inner meaning of events which are happening around us, under the hand of God, that we weep so bitterly. What we suppose we have lost is really close at hand, and what we count disastrous is

JOHN AND PETER RUNNING TO THE TOMB. John 20: 1-4.

From Painting by EUGENE BURNAND. Modern Swiss Artist.

part of the process designed to irradiate our lives for evermore.

In her grief Mary mistook Jesus for the gardener, but who shall say that she was greatly mistaken? for surely Jesus is the Keeper of the Church, which may fitly be compared to a garden. At that moment he had come into it to lift up one drooping flower. She recognized the intonation of his voice, for speech is ever a tell-tale. In the resurrection we shall hear again tones that we have not heard since childhood. In v. 17 women receive the highest authority for acting as evangelists. Let them tell out the glad news of a love that is stronger than death, and which passes through death undiminished and unchanged. Our beloved are waiting for us in the garden of Paradise. We shall hear and see them and be with them forever.

### 86. The Risen Christ Brings Peace.

*John 20: 19-25.* Evidently our Lord was clothed in the spiritual body of which the Apostle speaks, not subject to the laws governing physical life. Twice he uttered the salutation, *Peace be unto you.* The *first* time he accompanied his words with the indication of his wounds: *He showed unto them his hands and his side.* This was the peace of forgiveness, falling on conscience-stricken hearts as the dew distils on the parched herbage. "Look at the wounds of Jesus!" cried Staupitz to Luther, and there is, indeed, no other sign which can give rest to the penitent. This is the peace of the evening hour, when we come back from the soil and fret of the world, and need to have our feet washed and our heart quieted.

The *second* time the message of peace was accompanied by an injunction to go forth into the world, as he was sent from the Father, on the great errand of world evangelization. Then he breathed on them and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost,* which shortly after was to descend as a rushing, mighty wind. There is no way of remitting sin but by preaching the gospel of reconcili-

ation, with the Holy Spirit accompanying our message. This is the peace of the morning, when we go forth to our post of duty or danger.

### 87. Overcoming Doubt.

*John 20: 26-31.* How great the anguish of Thomas during that week, as he tossed between hope and fear, and saw on other faces the light which he might not share! At length Jesus came, and suited himself to the needs of the perplexed disciple, complying with the conditions that his poor faith had laid down. Jesus was set on winning this one poor starving soul to himself and blessedness.

It is unlikely that Thomas availed himself of Jesus' invitation to reach forth his hand, that he might touch as well as see. Christ's evident knowledge of what Thomas had said, and his willingness to meet it, were sufficient. But, as our Lord said, there is a greater blessedness than that which became his. When there is no star on the bosom of night, and no friendly voice in the solitude, to believe then is to get very near the heart of him who on the cross clung to the Father in the midnight darkness.

### 88. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

*John 21: 1-9.* It would almost seem as if the Apostles thought that the radiant vision of Christ was withdrawn forever; or did they think that they would glorify him best, and be most likely to encounter him, if they returned to the paths of ordinary toil? This miracle closely corresponds to that recorded in Luke 5, and proves that the methods of the *risen* Lord are not unlike those of his earthly ministry. Still he stands on the shore in the morning haze, to comfort the hearts of discouraged workers, telling them where to cast their net and revealing the certainty of his help. The eyes that love as John loved are the quickest to descry his presence. He thinks not only of our *spoils*, but of *us*, and provides for our sustenance and comfort—not bread only,

but fish and a fire. Is not this a picture of the believer's death?—the plunge into the cold stream of dividing water; the welcome on the other shore; the discovery that Christ had expected and prepared; and the feast with the Lord himself, as he girds himself to minister.

### 89. "Lovest Thou Me?"

*John 21: 10-19.* Christ thrice questioned Peter's love, thus giving him the opportunity of canceling his threefold denial. There are two Greek words for "love." In his questions our Lord chose the higher, while Peter in his replies humbly chose the lower till in his third question our Lord came down to his level. Christ forecasted the hatred and opposition of the world, and suggested to Peter and the rest that the only way to combat and overcome was in the fervent love that they had for him. Only this could give them the necessary tenderness and delicacy in leading and feeding the flock.

### 90. The Testimony of a Beloved Follower.

*John 21: 20-25.* Having cautioned Peter, our Lord seems to have moved away, bidding Peter follow—a mandate intended to convey a deeper meaning. John followed some steps in the rear. Hearing footsteps, Peter turned and was seized with curiosity to see how far the future experiences of John and himself would agree. At once, without gratifying his curiosity, our Lord explained that the life-plan of his servants is determined by his will—*If I will.* It is equally certain that his arrangements for us are carefully adjusted to our nature, our special characteristics, and the service which we are best able to render. Peter was to be the Apostle of the tried and suffering. John was to behold and declare the apocalyptic vision of the Living Church. The one, contrary to his native disposition, wrote the Epistle of patient waiting; the other pictured the triumphant advent of the Son of God.

*(The questions on Sections 57-90, to be found on pp. 234, 235, will serve as a review at this point.)*

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# REVIEW QUESTIONS ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

## OUTLINE.

(*a*) What is the theme of this Gospel?
(*b*) What is the fourfold witness by which the theme is established?
(*c*) What is the purpose of the Epilogue?

## INTRODUCTION.

(*d*) What special name is applied to this Gospel?
(*e*) How does it differ in purpose from the Synoptic Gospels?
(*f*) When was it probably written?

## SECTIONS 1-28. CHAPTERS 1-6.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

1. What purposes of Jesus' life are revealed by the titles given him in the prologue of John's Gospel?
2. What was the mission of John the Baptist?
3. By whom was the voice heard at the time of Jesus' baptism?
4. What disciples of John early became followers of Jesus?
5. How was Nathanael brought to Jesus? What did Jesus say of him?
6. What was Jesus' first miracle?
7. How did Jesus show his regard for his Father's house?
8. What universal need did Jesus declare to Nicodemus?
9. How are we judged by God's greatest gift to us?
10. How did John the Baptist view the growing popularity of Jesus?
11. What did he testify regarding the divine authority of Jesus?
12. To whom did Jesus promise the gift of "living water"?
13. How did Jesus define true worship?
14. How did the woman of Samaria respond to Jesus' appeal?

15. What were the results following Jesus' brief visit in Samaria?
16. How was the son of the Capernaum nobleman healed?
17. What miracle was wrought at the pool of Bethesda?
18. To what accusations by the Jews did the miracle lead?
19. What did Jesus say of his power in relation to his Father?
20. How did he compare his witness with that of John the Baptist?
21. Why did Jesus declare that Moses himself accused the Jews?
22. What festival was bringing to Jerusalem the multitudes whom Jesus fed? How does this fact add meaning to his words?
23. What was the effect of this miracle upon the crowd?
24. What is the first and chief work that God requires of us?
25. What does Jesus say he was sent from heaven to do?
26. How did Jesus answer the demand for a sign?
27. How does he express the idea that his followers must partake of the "living bread"?
28. In what words did Simon Peter express his belief in Jesus when many were turning away?

SECTIONS 29-56. CHAPTERS 7-12.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

29. What historic events were recalled by the ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles?
30. How can the truth of Jesus' teaching be tested?
31. What tradition was there about the origin of the Messiah and how did Jesus answer it?
32. What is implied in Jesus' promise about springs of living water?
33. How was Jesus' Galilæan home used as an argument against him?
34. What is the contrast between the attitude of the Jews and that of Jesus toward the sinful woman?
35. What symbol of the Feast of Tabernacles called forth Jesus' teaching about the "light of the world"?
36. How did Jesus realize the constant presence of the Father?

37. How did Jesus point the way to real liberty?
38. What does Jesus make the test of sonship?
39. How did Jesus compare himself with Abraham?
40. What part did the man born blind have in his own healing?
41. What was the testimony of the man before the Pharisees?
42. What was Jesus' teaching about suffering as suggested by the affliction of this man?
43. To what Eastern customs is reference made in the parable of the sheepfold?
44. What is Jesus' promise about his "other sheep"?
45. How did Jesus meet the challenge, "If thou art the Christ, tell us"?
46. Why was John's witness to Jesus recalled by the crowd beyond Jordan?
47. What danger did Jesus face in returning to Bethany?
48. What great assurance of the Resurrection did Jesus give to Martha?
49. What expression of sympathy with human grief did Jesus show at Lazarus' grave?
50. Why did Jesus offer a prayer of thanksgiving at the tomb?
51. How did Caiaphas unconsciously declare the meaning of Christ's death?
52. What supreme value was there in Mary's anointing of Jesus?
53. What old prophecy was recalled by Jesus' entry into Jerusalem?
54. Why did Jesus declare the great law of sacrifice at the time when the Greeks came seeking him?
55. What did Jesus promise would come to pass if he were "lifted up"?
56. What motives kept some would-be disciples from acknowledging Jesus?

## SECTIONS 57-90. CHAPTERS 13-21.

(*Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.*)

57. How did Jesus illustrate the lesson of humility? Why was there special need of this lesson?
58. How did Jesus warn his disciples of Judas' coming treachery?

59. What oriental customs are recalled by Jesus' last meal with his disciples?
60. By what sign would all men be able to recognize the disciples of Jesus?
61. How did Jesus answer Philip's question about the Father?
62. What various meanings are suggested by the word "Paraclete"?
63. What does Jesus say about his last gift to his disciples?
64. How may we be sure of fruitful living?
65. What does it mean to be called "friends" of Jesus?
66. Why did Jesus believe his disciples must face suffering and hatred?
67. How is the work of the Spirit described?
68. What consolation did Jesus promise his disciples in the face of coming sorrow?
69. Why were they to be of good cheer?
70. How does Jesus define "life eternal"?
71. What were Jesus' chief petitions for his disciples in his last prayer?
72. What was his prayer for the work they were to do?
73. Where did Jesus go with his disciples after the supper?
74. Where was Jesus first examined? Which of the disciples followed him?
75. How did Jesus defend himself before Annas?
76. How did Pilate attempt to shift responsibility?
77. What did Jesus declare to Pilate about his kingship?
78. What may have been Pilate's motive in the scourging of Jesus?
79. What motive finally determined Pilate's decision?
80. What was the inscription above Jesus' cross?
81. What friends stood beside the cross of Jesus?
82. Why was Jesus' side pierced by the soldiers?
83. What were the circumstances of Jesus' burial?
84. What purpose seems to underlie John's account of the Resurrection?
85. What message did Jesus give Mary for his followers?
86. How did he reassure his disciples at their first reunion?
87. What further confirmation did he grant to Thomas?
88. How did Jesus manifest himself to the fishermen in Galilee? Who were present?
89. What test of love did Jesus give Peter? What did he tell him of his future?
90. With what observation does the Gospel conclude?

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